

**FROM THE SEAT TO SERVANT: DEVELOPING A MODEL OF INCREASING
SERVANT VOLUNTEERS IN THE CHURCH TO INCREASE
THE EFFORTS OF REACHING THE COMMUNITY**

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ABSTRACT

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by
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The context is the Fresh Wind Christian Center of Memphis, Tennessee.

The problem within the context is that Fresh Wind encompasses very few committed servant volunteers, resulting in a minimum number of service offerings to our church and community. If the Fresh Wind Christian Center participants receive servant volunteer training, this will increase the number of servant volunteers, addressing their current lack of involvement. This project commenced over six weeks. A mixed methodology of interviews, journaling, and questionnaires was used to establish its effectiveness. The project results positively substantiated my hypothesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank Doctors Mack and Miller and the Effective Leadership for Creative Ministry in the Post-Modern Generation focus group for their guidance, support, and encouragement. I also am grateful to the Faculty Consultant of our group, Dr. Garland Thompson, for your input and advice. I would also like to thank Fresh Wind Christian Center Church for participating. Most importantly, I want to thank my wife, Toni, and my twin daughters, Carmen and Candace, for allowing me the space and time to accomplish my goals,

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, Toni, my daughters, Candace and Carmen, my granddaughter, Reina, and the participants and members of Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. With God's grace and hard work, you can receive the desires of your heart and accomplish your goals.

ABBREVIATIONS

CSB	Christian Standard Bible
ESV	English Standard Version
FWCC	Fresh Wind Christian Center
MSG	The Message Bible
NIV	New International Version
NLT	New Living Translation

INTRODUCTION

Embarking on the journey of theological education through the doctoral program at United Theological Seminary has proven to be a profoundly enriching experience intertwined with its fair share of challenges. The program has demanded that I balance various commitments, including attending an intensive week and peer session each semester, engaging in in-depth discussions, and dedicating countless hours to researching and writing comprehensive papers. Each step on this path has pushed me to explore complex theological concepts and contend with diverse perspectives while managing other responsibilities beyond the classroom, such as being a bi-vocational pastor, full-time employee, husband, father, and mentor. Managing these various obligations has tested my time management skills, reinforced my passion for my studies, and increased my prayer time and commitment to personal and spiritual growth.

The probe began with the attempt to discover a point of ministry focus (Chapter One) between the Fresh Wind Christian Center context. During this probe, it became clear that my diverse roles in the corporate environment have given me extensive expertise across multiple professional domains, including sales, customer service, data management, and non-profit and business marketing. Each of these roles has played a pivotal part in shaping my professional growth and has given me a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies inherent within different professional contexts.

It was also discovered that the context had developed, and the pastor and the first lady were operating the ministry similarly to a small grocery store where there would be

a mom and a pop who did everything. For example, the pop would have to stop stocking groceries to check out our customers, and the mom would have to stop cutting meat to get something from the stockroom in the back. Although there were other leaders within the ministry, there was no structured way of recruiting, training, and launching servant volunteers. Many would speak up and sign up but not show up for various services and events. One example that expressed the great need for additional servant volunteers was when the church sponsored a car show with an expected crowd of more than 200 in attendance, and only nine people showed up to help and assist with this event. When implemented, this project would assist in creating a culture of serving. Our outlook at Fresh Wind Christian Center is, “Serving is who we are, and this is what we do.” Serving and volunteering are more significant than this project—they are who Fresh Wind is and what we do. At this time, it was hypothesized that if the Fresh Wind Christian Center participants receive servant volunteer training, this will increase the number of servant volunteers, addressing their current lack of involvement. The trained servant volunteers would positively impact the ministry in-house and in the community. James Hunter, in his book *The Servant: A Simple Story About the True Essence of Leadership*, states, “Servant is simply the business of identifying and meeting the legitimate needs of the people entrusted to your care. Meeting their needs, not their wants—being their servant, not their slave. And what they need may not be what they want. What your children or employees may need will probably look a bit different from what they want.”¹

¹ James Hunter, *The Servant: A Simple Story About the True Essence of Leadership*. (Rocklin, Calif.: Prima Pub., 1998), P.16

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics defines volunteers as “persons who did unpaid work (except for expenses) through or for an organization.”² Throughout this thesis, you will see the title "Servant Volunteer." This title represents a group of unpaid individuals willing to identify and meet the legitimate needs of the people under their ministry's care.

After forming a hypothesis, John 13:3-17 was sought as the biblical foundation for the research project (chapter two).³

This text was chosen because of this powerful transition in Jesus’ ministry. The first thing He did when He was given complete authority and power was serve others. Jesus has us ALL on His mind. Serving the disciples was far-reaching because of the culture He was creating! At Fresh Wind: Serving is who we are, and this is what we do.

The text was carefully examined to uncover its more profound meaning and interpretation. The text further revealed the most impressive example of serving, as exemplified by Jesus, our savior.

In the historical foundations (chapter three), the first segment revealed the historical and current aspects and evidence of the issues that plagued us before and currently and the foreseeable challenges ahead of us concerning servant volunteers in the church. Secondly, we will share how Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International's 40 years of principles and work transitioned and revolutionized more than 3,000 churches. Dr. Bell obeyed God's call to be a “Pastor’s Friend” to Pastors within the Body of Christ.

² United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Volunteering in the United States, 2013,” news release, February 25, 2014, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/volun.nr0.htm>.

³ John 13:3-17, New Living Translation (NLT). Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this document are from the NLT.

The subsequent task involved deeply exploring the theological foundations concepts found within both practical and systematic theology (chapter four). The challenge of having enough serving volunteers remains despite the programs and service offerings at Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. This lack of hands, discipleship, and mentoring contributes to the issue. Theological postures such as systematic and practical theology are used to address this issue. Systematic theology focuses on Jesus' outreach and pouring into man, while practical theology focuses on Jesus' leadership under the Holy Spirit. Practical theology is a critical and constructive reflection within a living community about human experience and interaction, correlating the Christian story and other perspectives. The lens of Systematic theology helps us understand and defend our faith, while practical theology provides the plan and implementation in the sense of application. The combined theology methods will reveal God's relationship with us through His Son Jesus and how we relate to current and future servant volunteers within the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church.

This portion of the project explored and promoted the interdisciplinary foundational theories (chapter five) in specific areas to address the shortage of servant volunteers at Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. The project examined several non-church-related models, the One Minute Manager and The Museum of the Bible, to develop a model that can offer robust support and empower the church and ministry to serve the congregation and local community better. The chapter will emphasize the interconnectedness of faith and service, underscoring the profound impact of practicing one's faith through practical compassion and meaningful engagement when serving others. The next reveals stories from Black Enterprise and one of Savoy's "Most

Influential Black Executives in Corporate America,” highlighting the example of an African American succeeding and giving back his time serving the community.

The latter aspect of this triune theme focused on the volunteer service framework developed by the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. By implementing this framework in conjunction with a service management platform, the aim is to tackle the shortage of volunteer workers and expand the variety of programs and services offered to the congregation and the local community surrounding the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church.

In conclusion, in the foundational research (chapter six), this project not only developed the participants but also developed me and has been a catalyst for my growth. It has been encouraging to know that this project is going to benefit all future participants, particularly in teaching, training, transitioning, and trusting the participants to engage with their new tools and resources in servant volunteer ministry. This project further revealed accurate data and feedback from my teaching. It also showed the impact of learning. I have never experienced this before. My goal is to continue redesigning and increasing this work as a published piece for distribution to assist other leaders, ministries, churches, and nonprofits that struggle with the challenge of not having enough loving servant volunteers to serve both the church and the community.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Our first task was to develop a theme and hypothesis upon which I would build the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) project to review the context of where the project took place. As a result, we sought to present and analyze the pertinent information to shape the formation, theme, and hypothesis. Secondly, I reviewed my relevant interests, skills, and experiences to further develop this chapter's aim.

We then revealed and deliberated the common points between the context and our skills and experiences to determine how they converged to form a theme and hypothesis. After proposing a theme and hypothesis, we ultimately outlined implementation methods to develop an effective Doctor of Ministry project.

Context

I performed a contextual analysis to present and analyze the ministry context. The findings yielded the following information. The Fresh Wind Christian Center Church of Memphis, TN, was founded by Pastor Phil and First Lady Toni Williams in 2008. The first service was at the Millington Community Center. Services were held there for a couple of months, and then the ministry moved to the YMCA on Walker near the University of Memphis. Initially, there was only Wednesday evening Bible study with the men who were residents of the YMCA. Later, they started having Sunday services in

the basement of the same YMCA. The residents of the YMCA regularly attended each of the services. The ministry remained there until 2010 after receiving word that the YMCA was soon closing its doors after more than five decades. The church moved again to the gymnasium at Buntyn Presbyterian Church at 561 S. Prescott St, in Memphis. The ministry continued for the next 10 years in the Buntyn Presbyterian Church gymnasium. Each week, the setup and breakdown team would transform a gymnasium filled with children's toys and games into a sanctuary on Friday night and return it to a play gym on Sunday evenings.

Geographic Descriptions

Fresh Wind is located at 2984 E. Harvester Lane in the Northwest portion of Memphis, known as the Frayser neighborhood. Primary access to the area is provided by Highway 51. The immediate neighborhood consists primarily of commercial uses along major roads with single-family residential surroundings and industrial uses in the immediate vicinity. It is situated less than 5 miles from downtown Memphis, where the famous Beale Street and the facilities of the professional NBA Basketball team – Memphis Grizzlies, are located. The church is also less than five miles from the University of Memphis Tigers basketball team coached by the former NBA star Penny Hardaway.

Memphis is commonly referred to as “America's Distribution Center” due to its location on the Mississippi River and the presence of the Memphis International Airport. This location has been an integral factor in its becoming the largest distribution hub in the country. Memphis distributes goods by air, truck, rail, and water. Geographically,

Memphis is within 650 miles of over 40% of the national population and can serve major urban cities with overnight service.

Shelby County is located in the extreme southwest of Tennessee and was founded in 1819 by Isaac Shelby. It is 785 square miles in size and has a population of 927,644 as of the 2010 census. It is the largest county in terms of population and geographic area.

Shelby County is part of the Memphis, TN-MS-AR Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).¹

The 7,000 sq ft building sits on 1.8 acres of land. This former Union Hall built in 1957 has now been reconstructed into a church and ministry facility. This building now has a sanctuary with the seating capacity of near 150; a lounge for millennials with a sofa, top tables and stools, large screen TV and hanging stringed lights; A cross training room for the youth between the ages of five and twelve years, Two POD (Place of Discipleship) rooms and a kitchen with a hospitality area. The parking area has been designed to accommodate 90 cars and trucks. The additional land and grounds are near one acre in size with an incredibly large, beautiful pecan tree seated in the middle of this land. This land is large enough for picnics, baseball, football, and volleyball games, and any other in-house or community events of our choosing.

Demographic Descriptions

As mentioned earlier, our church building is located in the Northwest portion of Memphis, in the Frayser neighborhood.

¹ United States Census Bureau, “Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019,” U. S. Census Bureau, Population Division, May 2020, <http://www.census.gov/>.

The Populations and Households Theme is as follows:

The study area's population of 2.5 miles is 21,534 with a projected decline over the next five years of 0.5%.

The Age Theme is as follows:

The percentage of the population between 0 to 4 years old is 2.3%.

The percentage of population under the age of 35 is 60%.

The Phase of Life group is largest at 65 and older.

The theme of the Education and Career Status is as follows:

The percent of adults 18 years and older with a college education is 11.5%.

The adults 18 years and older that are high school graduates is 35%.

The percentage of adults 18 years and older who have not completed high school is 15%.

The Community Diversity Theme is as follows:

The percent of current year racial ethnic Asian population is 3%

The percent of Black/African American (Non-Hispanic) is 69.1%

The percent of White (Non-Hispanic) is 21.7%

The percent of Hispanic or Latino is 4%

The percent of Pac Is/Am Ind/Other (Non-Hispanic) 2.7%

The Hispanic group has the highest projected growth

The Black group has the highest projected decline.

The Financial Resources Theme is as follow:

The study area's average household income is \$55, 264

The average household income increasing.

The percentage of the households below the poverty level is 33.6%²

The membership of Fresh Wind can mainly be characterized as a mixture of working-class, self-employed, and retired congregation. There are some, not many members but mostly visitors, that can be considered as near the poverty level and there are few, that have established themselves within and beyond what the above information would reveal or label as above the poverty line. More than 85 percent of the congregation has graduated from high school and 35% of the congregation have college degrees.

The Present Ministry

Our Vision at Fresh Wind is to build a multicultural community of faith exemplifying heaven on earth, all nations of people with the common purpose of worshiping and serving our Lord Jesus Christ through unity in faith. Our churches motto is “Building Faith (in Jesus) , Developing Character (of Jesus) and Cultivating Relationships (like Jesus): One Life at A Time.”³

Our Purpose is that we exist to fulfill the mission of the church that Jesus mandated in the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20. “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

² “Frayser Neighborhood in Memphis, TN, 38127 Subdivision Profile - Real Estate, Apartments, Condos, Homes, Community, Population, Jobs, Income, Streets.” 2025. City-Data.com. 2025. https://www.city-data.com/neighborhood/Frayser-Memphis-TN.html#google_vignette.

³ “About the Wind Memphis.” 2015. <https://www.thewindmemphis.org/about>.

Our Mission is to take part in the Great Commission is to make disciples in our immediate community and equip them with the tools they need to reach the world around them.

Our Values are in the form of an acronym F.R.E.S.H

F – Faith: Building faith through teaching the word of God

R – Reconciliation: With God, family, church, and community

E – Evangelism: Making disciples and equipping them for service

S – Servanthood: In the body of Christ and the community

H – Healing: Bodies, broken hearts, and broken relationships.

In 2020 (during the COVID-19 pandemic), the church purchased the building at 2984 Harvester Lane, Memphis, in the Frayser Area. Although we did not build from the ground, we did a build-out of the inside. A lot of prayer, praise, love for God, and the ministry of Jesus Christ at Fresh Wind Christian Center has left the building we now possess. The Fresh Wind Christian Center faces challenges due to the recent coronavirus pandemic from 2020-2022. As the Pastor, I can't place all the blame on the most recent pandemic for low attendance; however, some people have not returned to in-person worship since our doors have reopened. There could be several reasons why many people have not yet returned to in-house worship on Sundays. One of the staff members spoke with someone who has not yet returned to in-house worship. This person shared that they now view the live stream worship services online while visiting their elderly parents and other loved ones. Our ability to attract visitors, properly evangelize, and increase membership has been challenging.

There are many programs and services we, as a ministry, have implemented and would like to engage in. However, these efforts are quite challenging because we suffer greatly from a lack of committed volunteers. I understand clearly that it takes a group of committed people to commit their time, talent, and sometimes treasure to support many of the endeavors we have in place. There are the same few faithful people who are now becoming more and more weary and burned out because of the load each of them carries. Many of the volunteers from within the membership speak up and sign up but won't show up for the event, program, or occasion.

Both our operations manager and volunteer coordinator have reached out and offered incentives and food (but no money). The lack of committed volunteers also impacts the number of community offerings we would like to engage upon. Reverend Lawrence Spencer addresses this matter in his book entitled *The Ministry of Helps: A Manual for Local Church Organizations*:

“Why should we even think about "selling" our members on serving? In answer, let us look at Moses's ministry. He promised freedom and a homeland to millions if they followed him. God provided many miracles to convince them that Moses was the “man,” and that solidified his claim to leadership from God. When Moses led them out, their former oppressors gave them riches, food was provided every day by God, and their shoes did not wear out. Despite all this, Moses still had a problem keeping them committed, so we should not be surprised that it is difficult to get volunteers and we

experience a lack of commitment today. If we think people today are any different from the Jews of Moses's time, we are mistaken."⁴

I share Spencer's thoughts. Spencer emphasizes during Moses' ministry, the people were "promised freedom and a homeland to millions if they followed him." They were promised freedom from slavery, no more bondage, and an opportunity to live in a promised land from God. Spencer goes on to say, "If we think people today are any different from the Jews of Moses's time, we are mistaken. We have more miracles to point to than the ancient Jews ever thought of. We have the Messiah they only dreamed of, and we still fight the commitment battle. We have it too easy today. Faith is not perceived as needed for daily survival. Most go to God only when things are tough instead of praising Him daily for all His blessings, so we have the same challenge Moses had. Also, remember how the apostles and followers of Jesus fled after His arrest. People can lose faith and interest quickly in some circumstances."

One amazement is that during the year, most Sundays, special events, funerals, or maybe some Saturday outreach services, we struggle from week to week, month to month to fill volunteer capacities. This is a pressing issue that needs our immediate attention. However, when we announce the date for the volunteer appreciation banquet, we do it once a year; we reach capacity for attendance weeks in advance. Our question is, how can we secure the right faces in the right places? We have live-stream video cameras, but there are few operators.

⁴ Rev. Lawrence C. Spencer, *The Ministry of Helps: A Manual for Local Church Organization* (Bloomington, IN: Westbow Press, 2017), P.24.

At Fresh Wind, we have noticed that the distribution of our servant volunteer workers closely adheres to Pareto's 80/20 rule, where about 80% of the work is accomplished by only 20% of our volunteers. We sincerely appreciate the effort and time put in by our dedicated servants who significantly contribute to our organization.

To ensure that this small group of volunteers, who carry the major workload, feel valued and appreciated for their efforts, we have implemented a strategy to focus on and train them. By providing them with the required support and resources, we aim to encourage more volunteers to follow in their footsteps and help us achieve our mission of positively impacting our community. We recognize the importance of our dedicated servants who put much effort and time into our organization. Therefore, we have implemented a strategy to focus on and train this small group of volunteers who carry most of the workload.

We are committed to ensuring that every one of our volunteers feels deeply valued and appreciated for their invaluable contributions to our cause. We are dedicated to providing them with the support, resources, and training necessary to excel in their roles. Our mission is to inspire and encourage more individuals to join us in our efforts to make a lasting, positive impact on our community. Acknowledging that a small number of individuals carry out the bulk of the essential work, we prioritize attention and training for these devoted volunteer members of our team.

The Bible narrates a story in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 25, that sheds light on the importance of using our abilities to their fullest potential. The story is about a wealthy man going on a long journey and, before leaving, entrusts his servants with

different amounts of money based on their capabilities. To one servant, he gave five thousand dollars; to another two thousand, and the third, one thousand dollars.

The first two servants, given more money, immediately went to work and invested their master's money, doubling the amount entrusted to them. However, out of fear and caution, the third servant dug a hole in the ground and buried his master's money rather than investing it.

After a long absence, the wealthy man returned and called his servants to settle their accounts. The first two servants showed how they had doubled their master's investment, and he praised and rewarded them, saying they would now become his partners. However, the third servant, who had buried his master's money, returned it to him, explaining that he feared losing it and disappointing his master. The wealthy man was furious with this third servant's lack of initiative and took away the money he had given him. He then gave it to the servant who had risked the most and banished the cautious servant to outer darkness.⁵

The parable is a poignant reminder of embracing our talents and taking risks without hesitation. It encourages us to have confidence in our abilities and to pursue the opportunities that come our way actively. Within the Fresh Wind Church context, the parable underscores the significance of inspiring more people to volunteer as servants and messengers, spreading God's love and hope through diverse forms of ministry.

⁵ Matthew 25 14–30, New Living Translation (NLT)

It serves as a call to action for individuals to step forward and actively share the uplifting message with others, knowing that in doing so, they will experience a deep sense of joy and fulfillment that comes from serving God and their community.

In the role of a bi-vocational pastor, there is a need to manage a full-time work schedule, typically from Monday to Friday, with a usual start time of 8 a.m. and concluding between 5 and 6 p.m. It's essential to recognize that numerous members of the church staff, as well as servant volunteers, are concurrently engaged in full-time employment. It should be noted that the church does not have any paid personnel directly associated with it; instead, all positions are staffed by dedicated volunteers who offer their services without financial compensation. I must confess that my journey as a bi-vocational pastor would not be successful without the assistance and support of my wife and ministry assistant. Weptanomah Carter, in her book entitled *The Black Minister's Wife: as a Participant in the Redemptive Ministry of Her Husband*, stated, “No longer can the Black minister's wife be relegated behind the mask of her husband. She has served a role that identifies her responsibilities as being at times separate and unique, and at other times complementary to her husband.”⁶

My wife, Toni, has been a steadfast pillar of strength and creativity in our home, church, and ministry, continually shaping an environment of growth and support. Warren Wiersbe and Jim Cymbala in their book *On Being a Servant of God*, “Regardless of the ministry you now have—full-time or volunteer— if your ministry is hurting your home,

⁶ Weptanomah Carter, *The Black Minister's Wife: as a Participant in the Redemptive Ministry of Her Husband*, (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1995), 93.

there's something wrong with your home or your ministry or both. God doesn't usually tear down one good thing to build up another good thing. If your home is competing with your ministry and creating uncomfortable friction, you need to stop and take stock of things and make some radical changes."⁷

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the church established an online presence through Zoom, dramatically benefiting training sessions and meetings. Nevertheless, volunteer turnout for events and services has remained consistently low, leading to a situation where there are often more visitors than volunteers available to assist with ministry events.

Addressing the issue of low attendance at our in-person worship services presents us with not only a challenge but also an opportunity for growth and spiritual enrichment. We needed to ascertain whether the cause is a reluctance to return to public gatherings or a preference for the comfort of staying at home and watching online. By resolving this issue, we can significantly enhance our outreach to the community through the programs and services provided by God. This will also enable us to draw in individuals who are eager to participate in corporate worship, encounter the divine presence, and engage in fellowship with the congregation.

After much contemplation, we are convinced that our team is well-prepared with the necessary capabilities and expertise to fulfill the vital mission of engaging with our church and local community. Our church doors remained closed for nearly a year in response to the pandemic, and since reopening, we have observed consistently low

⁷ Warren Wiersbe and Jim Cymbala, *On Being a Servant of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007, P.103

turnout. This has prompted one to consider whether individuals are still hesitant to return to in-person gatherings due to lingering concerns over safety or if they have grown accustomed to engaging in our programs and services remotely from the comfort of their homes.

We implemented a comprehensive range of stringent safety protocols to safeguard the well-being of all participants. These measures encompass regular and thorough sanitization procedures, strict enforcement of social distancing guidelines, and mandatory mask-wearing. We emphasized to attendees that safety remains our utmost priority.

Effectively addressing this challenge is paramount for us to successfully connect with our community through the diverse array of programs and services at our disposal. Our aim is to revitalize our church's capacity with individuals eager to partake in the enriching experience of collective worship, bask in the presence of the Lord, and relish the fellowship of like-minded individuals.

Luke 14:21-23 says, “The servant returned and told his master what they had said. His master was furious and said, ‘Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’ 22 After the servant had done this, he reported, ‘There is still room for more.’ 23 So his master said, ‘Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full.’”⁸ As the pastors and leaders of our church, it is imperative that we proactively tackle the significant decline in attendance at our in-person worship services. To effectively address this issue, we must conduct a thorough analysis to understand the underlying

⁸ Luke 14:21-23, New Living Translation (NLT).

reasons and identify appropriate solutions. Our initial focus should be determining whether the decrease in attendance is primarily due to lingering concerns about the ongoing pandemic or if there is a shift in preferences towards the convenience of participating in services from the comfort of home.

Regardless of the underlying factors, whether societal, cultural, or individual, we must explore and implement strategies to enhance our outreach efforts to the broader community. We must conscientiously utilize the diverse range of programs and services to appeal to individuals eager to participate in corporate worship, experience the profound sense of the divine, and actively engage in fellowship within the congregation. By doing so, we can effectively transform the church into an inviting and all-embracing sanctuary for people of all walks of life. This will help cultivate a profound and unifying sense of belonging for those searching for spiritual guidance, strength, and solidarity.

One firmly believes God has equipped us with the necessary skills and strengths to accomplish this mission. Reopening our doors after almost a year of closure has been a significant challenge, and attendance has remained consistently low. However, I am optimistic that we can overcome this obstacle and reach a wider audience by adapting to changing circumstances and finding innovative ways to engage with the community.

Addressing the issue of low attendance at our in-person worship services is a top priority for our church and community. Our goal is to carefully identify the underlying causes of low attendance, whether it's due to scheduling conflicts, lack of engagement, or other factors. By understanding the root of the issue, we can then develop and implement effective solutions that leverage our existing resources and build upon the strengths of

our church community. Through this process, we aim to enhance our outreach efforts and create a warm, inviting church environment that welcomes all community members.

In the parable found in the Gospel of Luke and a similar one in the Gospel of Matthew, there is a story of a lord or master who arranges a banquet and sends his servants to inform the invited guests. Surprisingly, the original guest invited declined the invitation. In response, the master dispatches his servants to go outside the city, along the highways and hedges, to invite those who are poor, crippled, blind, and lame to attend the banquet instead.

While this parable is not about the servants, I think it's important to consider their role in the story. Who were these servants? Who were the people that sent out the original invitations? Who alerted the invited guests? Who prepared the food, set the tables, served the food, and cleaned up after dinner?

The impediment is not creating programs and services to support underprivileged communities. We have ample resources to nourish starvation and offer clothing to the deprived. Instead, the hurdle lies in recognizing and valuing the importance of each person who contributes to building a strong community bond. In the current scenario, it is imperative to acknowledge the indispensable worth of those who selflessly serve.

Ministry Journey

Reflecting on the process of writing my spiritual autobiography has been a deeply introspective journey. It has allowed me to gain profound insights into my personal development and experiences, directly informing me and enriching my contributions to my current project. My diverse roles in the corporate environment have given me

extensive expertise across multiple professional domains, including sales, customer service, data management, and non-profit and business marketing. Each of these roles has played a pivotal part in shaping my professional growth and has given me a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies inherent within different professional contexts.

Diverse experiences highlighted the importance of having a history of actively engaging with individuals from varied cultural, social, and belief backgrounds to enhance communication skills. By demonstrating active listening and posing insightful inquiries, one could acquire a more profound insight into the perspectives held by others, thereby improving their overall comprehension of the diverse viewpoints of those participating in the research.

Learning to practice forbearance and understanding was crucial for successfully navigating church life's intricate and multifaceted dynamics. These qualities fostered a deep appreciation for the diverse range of perspectives within the church community and played a pivotal role in effectively managing interpersonal relationships and dynamics within the ministry. Moreover, honing the ability to discern the underlying causes of a lack of commitment to serving was equally essential when recruiting, training, and launching more servant volunteers to serve the church better internally and the community in outreach. This involved thoroughly examining individual motivations and barriers to commitment and creating tailored strategies to address them effectively.

In my second year of college, my journey into ministry commenced when I was elected president of the Black Gospel Choir. This pivotal role allowed me to lead worship, facilitate Bible studies, and occasionally address the Baptist Student Union

luncheons. I underwent a significant personal transformation as I devoted more time to studying, worship leading, and teaching. The powerful testimonies of individuals deeply moved me, demonstrating the remarkable impact of faith on their lives. Despite projecting a composed exterior to the world, I had become adept at concealing my struggles and maintaining a carefully curated public image.

I could keep my double life hidden from others, but deep down, I knew that I could never hide from God. One serene Sunday afternoon, the gospel choir, under my guidance, delivered a moving performance at a local church. The pastor shared a compelling and thought-provoking message, drawing inspiration from the Gospel of John, chapter 14, verse 12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." His words emphasized the divine expectation for us to strive for greater deeds but with a righteous and pleasing life in His eyes. Though his address was to the congregation, its impact on me profoundly led to a significant shift in my core beliefs and subsequent actions.

The impact of my experience at the church was profound. From that moment on, the phrase "greater works" echoed incessantly in my mind. It became clear to me that I was being called to fulfill a purpose in ministry and share the teachings of Jesus Christ. Reflecting on this, I believe that our approach to training volunteers could benefit from an emphasis on cultivating a "greater works" mentality and fostering a selfless mindset. I recall my father, the late Pastor Monroe Williams, often speaking about the importance of holding a "come-to-Jesus" meeting, and I couldn't agree more with his sentiment. My ministry journey has involved serving in various capacities throughout my life. I served

as a junior usher and youth choir member and later became the musician and minister of music for my father, the pastor. In my second year as a college undergraduate student, I was elected President of the Black Gospel Choir. Being president of the choir was an opening for me to lead worship and Bible studies and occasionally speak at the Baptist Student Union luncheons. The more I would study, lead worship, and teach bible study, the more my life changed. I heard many stories and testimonies about how people's lives changed, but because of the cycle I was in, I never thought it could happen to me. I knew how to hide my life and maintain a public persona that most people were pleased with.

Although I could hide from people, I knew I could never hide from God. One Sunday afternoon, the gospel choir was performing at a local church. It was an excellent performance, and the church pastor started to minister and give encouraging words. He used the scripture from the Gospel of John chapter 14, verse 12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he also do; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." He kept saying God wants greater works from you. He said, "You can do greater works, but your life is not pleasing in the sight of the Lord. This minister was speaking publicly to the audience, but I felt like he was talking directly to me. I left that church changed. All I could hear from that moment till this day was greater works. I knew there was a call on my life to minister and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Only during the training of servant volunteers could we emphasize a "greater works" mentality and help the people gain a sense of an "it's not about me" attitude. My father, the late Pastor Monroe Williams, often said we should have a "come-to-Jesus" meeting. For many years, I served as a music minister and organist. However, the melodious sound of the organ was shattered one fateful Sunday.

After delivering a passionate sermon, my father, a devoted preacher of twenty-eight years, suddenly collapsed, succumbing to the grip of congestive heart failure. He was swiftly rushed to the hospital, where he took his final breath and passed away. As a musician and a young preacher, I was not ready or qualified to serve as a pastor.

However, I was elected Pastor of the Mt Zion Missionary Baptist Church shortly after. I went from the piano to the pulpit one Sunday to the next. Losing my father, who was not only my best friend and mentor but also a beloved pastor, has presented significant challenges. Now, I find myself working in the same office where he once sat, preaching from the same pulpit where he delivered countless sermons, and serving the same congregation he led for twenty-eight years. As a newly elected pastor, neither I nor the church received any counseling to help us cope with our grief, and the initial years were particularly difficult. My wife and served eight years as Pastor before leaving and becoming the founder and Pastor of Fresh Wind Christian Center Church.

One firmly believes that it is crucial to raise awareness about the exemplary dedication of Pastor Phil to his ministry as a bi-vocational Pastor. His unfaltering commitment is commendable as he adeptly balances full-time employment with his responsibilities within the church. Warren Seibert, in his book, *The Calling of a Part-Time Pastor*, timely penned this, “The church will have realistic expectations for their part-time pastor, and no pastor can complete a day’s work and rest easy that there is nothing further that needs to be done. There is worship to plan, a sermon to prepare, a meeting to get ready for, a Bible study to work on, people to pray for, hospital visits to be made, phone calls to return, e-mails to read, and supper to make. This is even more challenging for a bi-vocational pastor. Knowing truly what is expected, from week to

week, season to season, is absolutely necessary.”⁹ Even during adversity, such as unemployment, Pastor Phil's unwavering dedication to the church shines through. His professional background enriches his ministry and equips him with valuable skills that he effectively applies to his pastoral work. By implementing various tools such as project management, planning, scheduling, business marketing, and management, we strive to enhance our staff and volunteers' organizational and leadership capabilities. It is our firm belief that this will significantly contribute to the success of our ministry in combating the shortage of servant volunteers and increasing assistance to the church and the community.

It's important to consider that the initial years of the ministry journey were deeply rooted in educational pursuits. This period was characterized by significant personal growth, including getting married, welcoming twin daughters into the world, assuming the responsibility of music minister for a seventy-voice choir, and achieving promotion to the position of the first pastorate, all while progressing in formal education.

The early years of ministering and working as a first-time pastor in Covington, Tennessee, were an authentic learning experience. It was astonishing and perplexing to witness how some church members displayed behavior as concerning, if not more so, than those outside the church community. It was a challenging and thought-provoking experience to grapple with the coexistence of incredibly kind individuals and those who exhibited some of the unkindest behavior I had encountered during my ministry journey.

⁹ Warren Seibert, *The Calling of a Part-Time Pastor: Developing a Guidebook for Small Church Leaders in the Reformed Church in America* (Bloomington, IN: Westbow Press, 2016), 78.

Some have continually puzzled over the difficulties associated with comprehending the reasons behind the resistance to change and personal development in this specific environment. Reflecting on our endeavors to lead and aid others, my wife and I vividly recall the subdued discussions and frequent frustrations that left us unready and overburdened. Despite this, we remained unwavering in our conviction that it was through grace that we could navigate through this arduous phase of uncertainty.

Stan Toler's *Practical Guide for Ministry Transition* notes, "Sometimes we need a change. We are ready for a change. Conditions are ripe for a change. Some people seem to grasp this, understand it, and act upon it, while others seem to resist it, block it, deny it, and continue sitting on the nail for far too long. No Change, No Growth. Life is full of changes. They're unavoidable. The only way to achieve growth and maturity is through change. No change, no growth."¹⁰

At the Fresh Wind Christian Center, our worship services, bible classes, Sunday School classes, training sessions, counseling sessions, and business meetings are one hour long. There is a process flow chart and Excel spreadsheet that our operations manager uses each Sunday morning. There is a timed agenda for each of our meetings, and each facilitator in our bible classes has a set amount of time to present the lesson. I have rarely seen this type of structure in all the churches I have attended, played music for, or just visited. I share with our staff that, as much as possible, nothing happens; everything must be planned. In addition, as cliché as it may sound, I often tell them, "What's measured and monitored gets done." This eliminates the micro-manager profile. Things move

¹⁰ Stan Toler, *Stan Toler's Practical Guide for Ministry Transition: How to Navigate Pastoral Change Personally and Professionally*, (Indianapolis, IN: Wesleyan Pub. House), P 65.

freely if a process flow is in place and all expectations are set. With all of these items in place, we struggle to increase member attendance and the number of volunteers working in various capacities.

Each month, I send a note to all members (in hopes of recruiting additional volunteers for the next month). The letter says, “Hello, Fresh Winners. The volunteer timeline for (whatever the upcoming month is) is available, and it is open to all to have an opportunity to volunteer in your service on Sunday mornings. (Training is available) Also, you do not have membership to be a volunteer. Please sign up and enter your name before the suggested deadline. After this date, the volunteer opportunity for next month will be closed. No exceptions! The signup list for the following month will be available soon.

Please consider your availability and enter your name to volunteer. You may also enter a family member's name (with their permission). If you choose not to volunteer, please let us know and We will remove your name from the monthly email list. Please note that some areas are static, and we will not change those people fulfilling those areas. I am asking volunteers to sign up for only one area per Sunday. Don't just come to church to sit and see; come to church to serve. We make this appeal each month. Did you also notice you do not have to be a member to become a servant volunteer?

Develop the Synergy

Considering the Fresh Wind Christian Center's stagnant growth pattern, I intend to glean from and merge my ministry interests and skills with the needs of the church's

context. This alliance will identify the contextual needs within the church and ministry and result in a reasonable yet radical methodology for addressing each issue.

First, we must address the prevailing issue of low attendance. When randomly speaking to some of the church leaders, surveying their thoughts, and commenting on what they heard from the non-attending members, some of the reasons for or less frequent attendance were sports; Sunday is my only day off from work; I own my own business, and we are open on Sunday; and lastly, my job requires me to work on Sundays.

Although these reasons may seem valid on the surface, not judging or evaluating anyone's situation, this brings to my remembrance when some of these members had no gainful employment and were continuing to request for prayer each Sunday that they may find a job. However, after God blesses them with a great job, they soon start to become sparingly in attendance or absent on Sundays, which reverts to one of the above excuses of "Sunday is my only day off work". When asked about the online bible study on Wednesday night on the Zoom platform, many of the responses were the same. One poor but honest excuse for not attending bible study on Zoom was, "Wednesday night is when my favorite TV program comes on." As hard as this was for me to accept as reality, it was true. Many people place small, insignificant items of idolatry before a true and living God, forfeiting the opportunity to learn of Him, His Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Growing up in a small church, attendance and an abundance of volunteers was never a problem for the Pastor and staff. Although this church was small, I remember the teachings were good, and we were all involved in the ministry as a family and with other families. The fathers most likely would be the ministers, deacons, and ushers; some were

in the choir and male chorus. The women would be church mothers, ushers, greeters, choir members, and Sunday School teachers, and all the children would be in Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and in various choirs and junior or youth ushers. As a group of young boys, we never wanted to miss Sunday School. Each Sunday, our Sunday School teacher would place a star by our names on the attendance poster, and at the end of each month, if you had all stars by your name, you would receive a prize. My motive for attending was the prize; however, the Sunday School teacher's motive was to teach us about the greatest prize anyone could ever receive, Jesus Christ.

In his book entitled *The Post-Quarantine Church: Six Urgent Challenges and Opportunities That Will Determine the Future of Your Congregation*, Thom Rainer states, "To lead successfully in the post-quarantine church, you will have to lead without total clarity. You will have to lead with a lot of uncertainty. If anything has become clear, it's this: You can no longer lead according to bygone expectations, perspectives, and methodologies. A new era requires a new approach if you want to successfully reach the people God has placed in your path." He goes on to say "Bottom line: We can't do things the way we've always done them. For years, we have worked with and observed leaders who are effective in leading change in the church. The key is not only to lead change but to lead change that will last. Many church leaders commented on how receptive to change their church members became during the pandemic. That's not surprising. The need for change is more easily embraced during times of crisis. But most church members will be expecting a return to the old normal. So, let's say it again: Those

days are gone forever. Leaders must lead in a new and unsettling time.” We can’t do things the way we’ve always done them.¹¹

In the future, the low-attending members of the Fresh Wind Christian Center must realize that things will never be the same. There may be a new normal, but the old normal is no longer there. There was a time during worship we would sing a particular song, and each person would move from their seat and go to another person in the services and greet them with a warm hug or a handshake. However, during this post-pandemic era in which we now worship, the warmth of fellowship, handshakes, and hugs are scarce. One anonymous note submitted by a congregation member inquired “Why is the church requiring all who attend any service to wear a mask? The church should be the safest place of all”. My public response to this privately submitted note was gentle. I said, “Whoever you are, I understand clearly we are indeed kept by the blood of Jesus, and we practice social distancing by remaining six feet from others. We believe wearing a mask is a simple, loving, and courteous gesture toward others, as we do in restaurants, grocery stores and marketplaces across our city and town. We appreciate your help in keeping FWCC safe and healthy. If you are not comfortable, please view our services online from your own home.

This response may not have been taken well among some members and could be a mild contribution to the low post-pandemic attendance. I will also add that all of the people we see in restaurants, grocery stores, ballgames, malls, movies and marketplaces

¹¹ Thom S. Rainer, and Recorded Books, Inc, *The Post-Quarantine Church: Six Urgent Challenges and Opportunities That Will Determine the Future of Your Congregation*, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020), P. 90.

may or may not attend a local church or assembly, but I believe the attendance issue is not fear, it's simply choosing to do something other than serve and worship God.

Exodus 20:3-5, says "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;" Seemingly this is the time in which we live.

Rainer speaks a great truth as he says, and I agree, "The Bible is still the Word of God. Christ is still the only way of salvation. Prayer is still vital. Evangelism is still a mandate."

No doubt we could expand the list. He goes on to say, "The God we serve is the same yesterday, today, and forever. But for leaders and church members in the post-quarantine era, change is coming at an accelerated pace. I think by now you've probably gotten that message pretty clearly. Churches that refuse to change will inevitably decline or even die. Blunt but true.

One must be inclined to not forget that all things in church attendance are spiritual. The sermons are great, and the singing and worship have explosive contributions. The children's church is a place where your children never want to miss on Sundays. However, best stated by Spenser, "On the contrary, if you organize the non-spiritual parts of your church, the spiritual part, which is led by the Holy Spirit, can move more freely. People may not compliment you on your clean restrooms, but untidy restrooms will cause many to never come back. Also, if parking is difficult or

inconvenient, people simply will not come. If you are having chronic money challenges, people will have legitimate reasons for questioning the congregation's faithfulness to the tithe and the church's financial management. Read the manual, glean how to improve your church, and don't try to fix something if it isn't broken."

Second, we must focus on the lack of volunteers in the church and ministry during worship services and events. As I mentioned earlier, there are many programs and services we, as a ministry, have implemented and would like to engage in. However, these efforts are challenging because we suffer significantly from a lack of committed servant volunteers. I understand clearly that it takes a group of committed people to commit their time, talent, and sometimes treasure to support many of the endeavors we have in place. There are the same few faithful people who are now becoming more and more weary and burnt out because of the load each of them carries. Many volunteers from within the membership speak up and sign up but won't attend the event, program, or occasion.

In the year 2022, the church and congregation shared my vision in ministry to reach, serve, give, and grow within the immediate area around us. We endeavored as a ministry to identify and meet the needs of our immediate community. We also look to meet and interact with various people living on the margins of society, impoverished, homeless and church members with family in the penal system. Knowing many of the needs, we have ministries such as our Christmas Workshop "Partners in the Harvest" where we sponsored gifts for children between the age of 4-17. We also provide "Toiletry Care Kits" for a local homeless shelter. We have provided ministry programs such as providing light meals during Wednesday night bible study and Sunday Morning snacks

between Sunday School and morning worship. This provide us an opportunity to provide some food and offer the Gospel and love of Jesus Christ. We also implemented Saturday morning empowerment breakfast for men of the church and community once a month. The few helping hands that show up for each event are near burnout.

The Fresh Wind Christian Center is currently in the beginning stages of creating a mentoring program from within the ministry by fostering and developing authentic relationships between Jesus-followers and increasing the knowledge of Jesus through scripture. The objective for this program is to help individuals within the church both men and women overcome challenges that hold them back from living life to the fullest and making impactful contributions to the church and the Kingdom of God. Our ultimate goal is for our current mentors to develop mentee into mentors and those newly developed mentors are to recruit and mentor new mentees.

Thirdly, as a bi-vocational Pastor, a great work ethic has been consistent throughout my teen and adult life. Instead it being church on Sundays as a musician and a part-time job before college Monday – Friday, working has always been parallel to church and school. After getting married and having children, the need for full-time work was inevitable. I can never remember a time (other than unemployment stints between jobs) when I was not working a full-time job and working in the church. My first pastoral assignment was at a small Baptist church in Covington, TN. This was, at minimum, a one-hour drive from our home. There would be Sunday Services, weekly bible study, and various meetings on another day of the week. I remember there were times when the church's people and the church's needs did not consider that I held down a full-time job.

On the other hand, the needs of my career and the extensive travel did not consider that I was a Pastor.

In conclusion, the Fresh Wind Christian Center must seek ways to combat the challenges before us. It intends to seek and search for ways to have sufficient servants and volunteers within the ministry so we may “have enough faces in the right places.” As mentioned earlier concerning the parable of the feast, who were these servants? Who were the people that sent out the original invitations? Who alerted the guests? Who prepared the food, adorned the tables, served the food, and cleaned up after the dinner? We must also address the second challenge within our church and ministry: low attendance and participation from within the body of members. The first two challenges may work in tandem in that we have people who speak up and sign up but fail to show up. We, also with strong intentions, seek to work past being a bi-vocational Pastor and areas of increase to transition from the workforce to full-time ministry in the church and community.

My understanding of organization and structure from personal and spiritual experiences allows me to address these challenges by identifying a strategy for the Fresh Wind Christian Center to engage more people to attend church and more volunteers to serve. This strategy will involve establishing an outreach ministry in charge of developing effective ways to reach out and attract people to our ministry and generate a trained volunteer pool of ministry servants.

Suppose the Fresh Wind Christian Center increases the extremely low volume of attendance. In that case, this will provide a platform for more recruitment to combat the lack of volunteers and provide additional training for volunteers. Also, if volunteers were

trained and operating in a more consistent role, this would assist this bi-vocational Pastor in not being so overwhelmed with his duties, other than ministering the word of God to the people

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

In their book *The Volunteer Effect*, Jason Young and Jonathan Malm

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our ministries and organizations, yet we're living on life support because we have anemic volunteer systems."¹ According to Dictionary.com, One of the definitions of the word anemic is lacking power, vigor, vitality, or colorfulness; listless and weak.² I agree with Young and Malm. This quote supports my hypothesis that if we have enough trained servant volunteers to eradicate the lack, we will better reach the church inside and the community outside the walls.

The problem of not having enough powerful, vigor, vital, colorful, and strong servant volunteers was greater than any solution we could come up with. Our volunteer system at Fresh Wind Christian Center was on life support. While several members were working within the ministry, there remained a significant lack of a well-organized method for effectively recruiting, training, and launching servant volunteers. Many individuals would enthusiastically express their interest in getting involved, signing up for various roles and activities. However, despite their initial enthusiasm, a considerable

¹ Jason Young and Jonathan Malm, *Volunteer Effect, How Your Church Can Find, Train, and Keep Volunteers Who Make a Difference*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2020), 38.

² Dictionary.com | Meanings & Definitions of English Words. 2023, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/anemic>.

number would ultimately not show up for the services and events they had committed to, leading to a gap between intention and participation that hindered the overall effectiveness of the ministry's outreach efforts. This inconsistency created challenges in building a reliable community of servant volunteers trained and dedicated to supporting the ministry's mission.

Reference Scriptures A: John 13:3-17 NLT³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel wrapped around him.⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"¹⁰ Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean. ¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.

³ John 13:3-17 New Living Translation (NLT). Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this document are taken from the New Living Translation (NLT).

14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

The amalgamation of the preceding passages will unveil how this text conveys the purpose of this project. It emphasizes the need to address the church's shortage of servant volunteers. Volunteers form the cornerstone of our operations, and their involvement is essential for us to better engage with the community by spreading the gospel and facilitating the programs and services bestowed upon us by God.

The New Testament commences with the four Gospels, which chronicle the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The initial three books, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are commonly known as the Synoptic Gospels due to their shared perspective. Upon delving into Biblical studies, one has realized the remarkable similarities among these three Gospels, surpassing those found in any other books within the New Testament. Moreover, in addition to their parallels, each Gospel offers distinct contrasts and nuances on various theological and narrative themes.

The four gospel authors, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, each brought their unique perspectives and backgrounds to their writings about Jesus Christ as a servant. They tailored their messages to their specific audiences, addressing the needs and concerns of the people they were writing to. In my analysis, I have chosen to highlight the importance of recruiting, training and launching more servant volunteers within the

church community to actively engage with and support marginalized individuals, thereby expanding the reach of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Matthew

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus' identity is strongly emphasized as both the Messiah and King. At the same time, it highlights His deep humility and commitment to serving others. This is clearly demonstrated in the Sermon on the Mount and in His teachings about serving others, reminding us that true leadership is founded on compassion and selflessness.

Mark

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus is portrayed as the "suffering servant," emphasizing his profound commitment to healing and teaching, culminating in his crucifixion—an unparalleled act of sacrifice for the sake of humanity. This powerful depiction invites us to appreciate the depth of his love and the significance of his suffering as a transformative gift for all.

Luke

In the Gospel of Luke, the author powerfully highlights Jesus's deep compassion and unwavering concern for those marginalized and mistreated in society. This portrayal presents Jesus not just as a spiritual leader, but as a dedicated servant who actively reaches out to the poor and the outcast, embodying a profound message of hope and inclusivity.

John

In the Gospel of John, Jesus is powerfully depicted as the "Lamb of God," embodying the ultimate sacrificial love that takes away the sins of the world. This profound portrayal emphasizes his commitment as a servant who selflessly gives himself for the salvation of humanity, inviting all to embrace his redemptive grace.

While the synoptic gospels share accounts of certain events, they vary in how they are presented. The specific text chosen as a narrative is only found in one of the four synoptic gospels, John. There are other examples of servant volunteers in the gospels, which I intend to deal with in support of my thesis, such as the accounts of the parable of the banquet in Luke 14:15-24 and the parable of the wedding feast in Matthew 22:1-14. The writer writes about lavish dinners in each synoptic gospels, but with remarkable distinctions. Jesus illustrates the parable in Luke 14:6, speaking about a "certain man" giving a great dinner. In Matthew's parable, Jesus focuses on a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.⁴

Notice the intense language in verse 3, revealing Jesus preparing us for specific acts of His divine grandeur and majesty. Jesus is now fully aware of the authority granted to him and thoroughly understands his origin in heaven and his destiny to return to heaven. Jesus performs this act to which each of His disciples can fully relate. So he dresses himself like a household servant and performs a servant's task. Any one of the disciples would have gladly performed this service for him, but to perform it for the other

⁴ Matthew 22:2, New International Version.

disciples would have been regarded as an admission of inferiority, not to be tolerated when there was such competition among them for the chief place in their Master's kingdom.

This foundational passage is unequivocal. Jesus, in his profound humility, serves his disciples by washing their feet. More than a mere example, this act is a transformative event that establishes a culture of serving. As his ambassadors on earth, it guides us to serve others in the power of the Holy Spirit. In his book, *Mentor Like Jesus*, Regi Campbell states, "Jesus did it to model serving in a radical, emotional, physical way. Afterward, he added meaning to His act, explaining how love is about serving."⁵

In his book, *Following Jesus, the Servant King: A Biblical Theology of Covenantal Discipleship*, Jonathan Lunde stated "Jesus lived out the life of the Servant, and his disciples will emulate his Servant's life as they follow him. This is why the cross and the washing of the feet of others ultimately characterize the Christian's life."⁶

Chosen is John Chapter thirteen as the biblical foundation. This profound biblical text served as a solid foundation to undergird the hypothesis and theme for this project. This foundational text reveals the importance of creating a servant culture and supports Fresh Wind's outlook: "Serving is who we are, and this is what we do." This Gospel of John (which I frequently refer to my Bible study group as "the Fourth Gospel") reveals John as the individual credited for this writing. Please note that the internal evidence from the Gospel itself supports the idea that John, the son of Zebedee, wrote it. John was

⁵ Regi Campbell and Richard Chancy, *Mentor Like Jesus*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman. 2009), 162

⁶ Jonathan Lunde, *Following Jesus, the Servant King: A Biblical Theology of Covenantal Discipleship*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan,) 2010, 174.

not only an eyewitness to Jesus's miracles, teaching, and leading (1:14; 19:35), but he also identified himself in 21:20 as "the disciple Jesus loved" (see 13:23; 19:26; 20:2). In the passage Jesus says to His Disciples, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. The passage indicates Jesus is giving an example; I believe Jesus is creating a culture of serving.

In his *CSV Study Bible*, Dr. Tony Evans denotes John was the beloved disciple of Jesus, with whom he had a close relationship. He wanted the readers of his Gospel to know Jesus Christ and become intimate with him as well. To only know Jesus for heaven tomorrow is to miss the joy of heaven on earth in a growing, living relationship with Christ today. John brings both of these concepts together in his book. He says Jesus is the divine Messiah—God dwelling in our midst—who has a kingdom that is not of this world.”⁷

The research hinges on this comprehension, which aligns with our objective of bolstering the ranks and increasing the number of servant volunteers within the walls of our church and the immediate community. In Christian tradition, sharing the gospel and serving others within this ministry is often likened to a 'harvest,' with the followers of Christ being viewed as the 'laborers' who work to bring in souls for God. This involves welcoming people, showing them love, and serving them in a manner that reflects God's

Tony Evans, *CSB Tony Evans Study Bible*. (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2021) 4232.

grace and compassion. An article entitled “Washing Feet: An Act of Love and Servanthood” written by Shan Smith stated, “Over and over, we see Jesus taking the humble role of a servant, washing the dirty feet of those who should have been washing His. Why? Because He came to seek and save those who are lost and to serve. Because of what Jesus knew, He did what He did: He washed the disciples’ feet—an amazing, humble act of service for the King of kings and Lord of lords.”⁸

It is important to note that this interpretation focuses not on physical labor or servitude but on spiritual efforts and evangelization. The central theme is prioritizing spiritual pursuits of servanthood and disseminating religious beliefs rather than emphasizing manual labor or servitude. I was moved sincerely when I read in his book *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*, Duane Elmer stated, “It is God’s nature to serve, which is why Jesus came as a servant. The towel represents service and the robe represents status and power. We as Christians are never more like Jesus than when we serve. It is not the robe but the towel.”⁹

Jesus' primary emphasis in this text is serving. The real challenge, however, lies in finding a satisfactory number of willing and eager servants choosing to serve over being seen. It may sound cliché, but currently, we do not have enough individuals in suitable positions. The issue is not a lack of vision to implement programs and services. We have capable leaders who can instruct, educate, and guide dedicated individuals who are prepared to serve.

Shan Smith, “Washing Feet: An Act of Love and Servanthood.” Sycamore Sideline.
<https://www.sycamoresideline.com/blog/washing-feet-an-act-of-love-and-servanthood>, 2022.

⁹ Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006), p. 22

Literary Element of Text

The title of the Fourth Gospel continues the pattern of the other Gospels, being identified initially as “According to John.” Like the others, “The Gospel” was added later. Although the author’s name does not appear in the Gospel, early church tradition strongly and consistently identified him as the apostle John. The early church father Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp who was a disciple of the apostle John, and he testified on Polycarp’s authority that John wrote the Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia Minor when he was advanced in age. Subsequent to Irenaeus, all the church fathers assumed John to be the Gospel’s author. Clement of Alexandria wrote that John, aware of the facts set forth in the other Gospels and being moved by the Holy Spirit, composed a “spiritual Gospel”.¹⁰

Authorship, Features, and Dates

As mentioned earlier, the three synoptic gospels share similarities, but the gospel of John is unique in its individual focus in the opening prologue and its rich collection of Scriptures. This uniqueness provides a valuable opportunity for a focused and comparative study of how Jesus demonstrated love and established a culture of faithful service. According to Andreas Köstenberger in the book *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, “John states his purpose toward the end of his Gospel: “But these [signs] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by

¹⁰ John F. MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 2988.

believing you may have life in his name” (20:31). On a surface reading, “so that you may believe” suggests an evangelistic purpose, that is, leading John’s readers to first-time faith in Jesus as Messiah. At the same time, John’s Gospel seems to presuppose an audience already familiar with Scripture since it contains detailed instructions for believers, especially in the second half of the Gospel. What is more, there are few examples of directly evangelistic first-century documents. For reasons such as these, it seems that John’s purpose encompasses both aspects, evangelism of unbelievers and edification of believers, and that John pursues an indirect evangelistic purpose, aiming to reach an unbelieving audience through the Christian readers of his Gospel.

Finally, it is important not to confuse John’s likely purpose with possible effects of his Gospel. All other purposes must be seen as subordinate to this larger purpose or as effects that result from it.

One can appreciate Köstenberger's viewpoint that an evangelistic purpose encourages readers to embrace faith and hope in Jesus as the Messiah for the first time. This approach provides a valuable opportunity for individuals to reflect on their beliefs and consider the transformative impact of faith in their lives. According to the New Living Translation (NLT), “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.” This profound love embraces every believer and is generously extended to everyone, inviting them to believe in Him and experience a rich and fulfilling life in His name.

Köstenberger suggests that the Gospel of John assumes its audience is already familiar with Scripture. However, we should never assume that someone has heard the gospel. Instead, we should be guided by the Spirit in how we share it.

The Text in Context

In Luke Chapter 14, the gospel portrays a scene in which Jesus graciously accepts an invitation to a supper on the Sabbath day. The account delves into the events during this meal and the ensuing discussion between Jesus and the attendees about etiquette and the ideals of the kingdom. Notably, this dining encounter unfolds at the residence of a Pharisee, serving as the third and final gathering in that setting.

This is the parable of the Great Banquet, also referred to as the Great Supper in certain translations. This parable, spoken by Jesus during his final week on earth, is commonly known as the Passion week, occurring between Palm Sunday and Resurrection Sunday in Jerusalem. Although we will primarily delve into verses 15-24, it's essential to first establish some context by analyzing verse one. "Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely."

One can't help but find it intriguing that Jesus accepted the invitation despite knowing that the hosts were looking to find fault with him. Their close scrutiny of Jesus only confirmed their intentions. However, it's not surprising to see Jesus immediately display a heightened sense of intense focus, ready to address and challenge the host and his guests. The text reflects the familiar pattern of Jesus' opponents seeking to find fault with him by scrutinizing his intentions and actions.

It highlights Jesus' intense focus and readiness to address and challenge the host and his guests. He confronts their self-centered exploitation of Sabbath rules, their craving for recognition in public places, and they're greedily seizing every opportunity for seats of honor while neglecting the poor and marginalized. Verse 2 "And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy."

François Bovon Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27¹¹ notes that "Dropsy or edema was a disease whose symptoms were swellings, in particular of the abdomen. As a visible consequence of various kinds of illnesses, it was dreaded. When it became chronic, it weakened the heart and could lead to sudden death"

It is worth noting that the sole reference to Dropsy appears only in the book of Luke. It is possible that Luke, in his capacity as a physician, highlights this man's illness for the reader's benefit. However, he does not disclose the man's identity or the reason for his presence. As previously mentioned, it is conceivable that the host or some of the guests may have brought him there to test Jesus.

3 "And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"⁴ But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go." Jesus takes the lead by asking a thought-provoking question to shift the burden of proof to his critics and naysayers. Despite being experts in the law, the Pharisees and other guests were left speechless and unable to respond to Jesus' inquiry. In the midst of their silence, Jesus turns his attention to the needs of a man who may have been

¹¹ François Bovon, *Luke 2, A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27* Edited by Helmut Koester, Translated by Donald S. Deer (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 341.

purposely placed there to test him. This man, who was in need, is healed and made whole by Jesus, who then allows him to go on his way.

Imagine a man who had previously struggled with swollen limbs and abdominal water retention down to his ankles. Then, suddenly, the door bursts open, and he ecstatically dashes out of the house, leaping, dancing, and rejoicing in his newfound energy. As a gospel musician from the Baptist Church, I can almost hear the older members singing hymns such as, "I looked at my hands, and they looked new; I glanced at my feet, and they did too!" What was once a difficult trial has now transformed into a glorious triumph.

Jesus continues in verse five by saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" 6 And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

Jesus now gives them a comparison of a donkey or ox or (some translations say a son or work animal) falling into a pit. Will they leave the donkey or the ox to perish on the Sabbath? Or will they rescue them out of harm's way? They again would not answer. They sat there in silence.

One may believe they knew the answer or some political or religious statement, but they were not willing to say it. Even though it was the Sabbath day, Jesus brought up their own law to them and they could not answer him, spawning this parable from Jesus dealing with them regarding Etiquette. 7 So He told a parable to those who were invited when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: 8 "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; 9 and he who invited you and him come and say to you,

‘Give place to this man,’ and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. 10 But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. 11 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Traditionally, at these feasts, the servants would set up a table with three pillows around it. This is called the Roman Triclinium. According to Anthony Keddie's article "Triclinium Trialectics," There would be times when the host would have the servants arrange to seat, and at other times the guests would be allowed to choose their seating. There would be an order of reclining where there are three couches. The greatest reclines at the head of the middle couch; the one second to him reclines above him and the third reclines below him. This order of reclining would continue in this manner, and they would usually sit the people through the table and the middle pillow would be the place of honor at that table. They would recline on these pillows and eat in sort of a resting position.¹² Jesus takes notice and notes how the satisfaction of maneuvering for lofty exalted positions at the banquet and gives warnings that “for whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” (14:11).

There would be times when this could be quite an embarrassing situation. Picture one sitting at the head table but does not belong there. Maybe the host or the slave or servant would come up and say we are incredibly sorry; according to the honored and distinguished guests present, we do not have any place for you at this table. This person

¹² Anthony G. Keddie, “Triclinium Trialectics, The Triclinium as Contested Space in Early Roman Palestine.” *Harvard Theological Review* 113, no. 1 (2020): 63–88.

would then be escorted from the head table to a table in the back. Everyone at the banquet is watching and quietly exchanging words about you as you are being led to a table of less status closer to the back of the room. William Flewelling states this in his bible study publication of *The Gospel According to Luke 9:51 through 19*¹³ : Downward mobility, even relatively speaking, was never popular among important-feeling folk.

Downward mobility, moving from an over-ambitious presumption to a more accurate assessment, is marked by shame. The answer is to take the poorest seat available – one can imagine a lineup for the worst seat – so that the host can elevate you properly. That would be the glory [as opposed to shame] in the sight of the fellow guests. The motion then experienced would be UP. He further states that the question prevails so long as the mind is set upon the parameters of honor and glory and exaltation for self. The saying that closes the advice is direct: self-exalted folk are to be humbled, and self-humbled folk are to be exalted.

In the depths of my heart, I believe that humility is one of the traits or characteristics of greatness. Some of the most incredible people you will ever meet are the most humble people you will ever meet. Jesus additionally says (Matthew 23:11-12) “But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Jesus then advises the host not to invite his friends, the truly influential folk, the people of means who would be able to entertain him in return. But everybody invites relatives and friends and neighbors, particularly those who have the ability to give us

¹³ William Flewelling. *The Gospel according to Luke 9:51 through 19:27: A Bible Study*, (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2018), page 191.

some advantage, one way or another. In business and politics and even in the more informal patternings of our living, social life is a life of exchange.

One of the most humbling things to do is to have God use your life. When one realizes his life is not his own, humility causes that person to become more of a servant than wanting to be served. In the passage, Jesus emphasizes the concept of impartiality and equality in the Kingdom of God. He stresses that no individual will be elevated above another, and there will be no differentiation between people of varying importance. Instead, in our Lord Christ Jesus, we will all be unified and will partake in His glory and honor. This theme is reminiscent of the opening of the Gospel of Luke chapter fourteen.

While this parable is not about the servants, I think it's important to consider their role in the story. Who were these servants? Who were the people that sent out the original invitations? Who alerted the invited guests? Who prepared the food, set the tables, served the food, and cleaned up after dinner? There was an invitation for Jesus to come to dinner and notice the parables he teaches each has to do with being invited to dinner or a feast.

Jesus now turns to the host who invited him to this dinner on the Sabbath and makes this recommendation. 12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. 13 But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

Jesus encourages us to take pleasure in selfless hospitality. He advises hosts not to limit their invitations to friends, family, and wealthy or influential individuals who can reciprocate. Instead, he suggests inviting those who may not be able to repay the favor

but can bring a unique richness to the gathering. These individuals may not have the means to entertain in return, but their presence will be a source of joy and gratitude.

Jesus emphasizes the importance of extending invitations to those who are often overlooked and marginalized in society. He specifically mentions inviting the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, urging his listeners to consider those who may not typically receive such invitations. Furthermore, he encourages individuals to be generous without expecting anything in return, assuring them that their reward will come from God at the resurrection of the righteous.

It is evident that our less privileged communities are facing challenges in various aspects and are lacking resources in certain areas. The lack of support and resources from the local neighborhood church is contributing to the hardship experienced by many. These observations highlight the need for us to be more inclusive and for the church to be more accessible to the community.

The preceding passages have also shed light on the individuals we should be targeting. Within our church community, there are numerous needs, and our church and ministry consistently offer and provide resources to support those in challenging situations. However, we still lack the essential support from dedicated servants and volunteers to help fulfill the necessary responsibilities of the role. In the following and concluding passages, we will emphasize my project.

We are actively seeking way to eradicate the lack of servant volunteers within the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church, with a specific focus on recruiting more individuals to serve. Additionally, we are intensifying our outreach efforts to effectively engage with the community by sharing the teachings of the gospel and promoting the various

programs and services that are part of our mission. During a gathering where Jesus was present, one of the attendees remarked, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!" This statement reflects a deep sense of reverence and anticipation for the spiritual blessings that await in the kingdom of God.

Jesus continues with this statement. 16 Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' 18 But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' 19 And another said, 'I have bought five yokes of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.' 20 Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' 21 So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' 22 And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' 23 Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.'"

He (Jesus) continues to share another story with the guests at this dinner. He tells them there was a man who prepared a great supper, and there were many distinguished persons invited. At first glance, this parable in Jesus shares is not hard to decipher. The host (or certain man) who gives the dinner is God, and the servant who is doing the inviting is Jesus, the Son of God. The first or original group of invitees

represents the Jews. They believed that because they were God's chosen people nothing more of them was necessary for them to gain entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven (or here in this story, invited to the dinner). The guests who disregarded the servants were those Jews who ignored the prophets year after year who came to deliver the message of God, and possibly those who refused to believe in Jesus in the first century down to the twenty-first century.

The guests who were invited subsequently represent the Gentiles. Now, just at the precise moment, the man sends out personal invitations in the form of an announcement. He says the time has come for all guests to come now, for all things are now ready. Again and again, the courier, who is the servant (some translations mention slave), is asked to give regrets and to ask to be excused from the supper. Hearing this may seem a bit bizarre without a full understanding of the invitation practices of the first century. During these times, the invitations were sent out two-fold. Just think of a dinner banquet of this magnitude requiring two invitations. The first invitation would be more of what we know as a save-the-date announcement, revealing a great dinner would be held requesting an RSVP.

The second invitation (as mentioned in the text) indicates that all things are now ready, and the moment has arrived for you to come. The dinner host has planned and prepared the dinner based on the number of guests who responded indicating they would come. After the servant reveals to the host how many guests have accepted his invitation, he decides how many animals are to be killed and cooked.

Before we explore the guests' regrets and excuses, let's take aim and focus on the "all things are now ready." Although the text here only mentioned the one servant, there

were the other behind-the-scenes servants who prepared all things. As mentioned earlier, this parable is clearly about the Kingdom and the invitation to the great feast in the kingdom of God.

At this juncture, one will share an alternative view of the story. When the text notes all things are now ready and knowing the extent of this dinner there were many things to be made ready. One mentioned earlier that the servant represents the Son of God, Jesus Christ. According to the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:20 “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.” As ambassadors of Jesus Christ on earth, we have the privilege and responsibility of representing Him and sharing His message of love and redemption. We believe that God is working through us, urging people to be reconciled to Him through Christ. In a parable about a dinner, a servant returns to the host to convey apologies and excuses for not being able to attend the event. It's interesting to note the various reasons or excuses that the invitees unanimously begin to give for not attending the dinner.

They all have various groups of excuses, and each excuse emphasizes the things of life over the things of God and the Kingdom. The first individual provided an excuse, which was a business excuse, representing the care of the world. He states, “I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.” One would be the opposite of wise to purchase land you have not yet seen. Within this group, the need for greed and to follow the world surpasses everything else. This excuse is the opposite of Matthew 6:33 “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” This excuse of buying land and needing to go see

it just shows this person refuses to place God first and that worldly possession, status, and friendship with the world are more important than being a friend of God. I'm busy with business.

The second individual. I'm busy in my treachery of riches. Matt 6:24 says "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." It takes precedence over the Kingdom. He states "I have bought five yokes of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused. Who would buy five yokes of oxen without first testing them?"

One would not even consider the purchase of a new car without at least testing driving it around the block. This individual is completely unaware of the fact that riches won't satisfy the stiffest, greatest desires of the heart, and in fact, riches will eventually fade away. Buying five yokes of oxen without seeing this first would have been displaying how rich you are or deceived by what you think you may have for the appearance of others. My millennial daughters would indicate he is flexing. Now, either way, this shows the love of money is more important than the Kingdom of God.

The third individual states, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." I am busy being consumed by the pleasures of this life. This third individual is one that many believe to be most justified and understandable. While this individual does provide an excuse that includes desires, aspirations, hopes, and dreams of status and riches, it does involve placing friends, families, and those we love the most over the Kingdom of God. This third individual says I have married a wife and cannot come. He does not say He is going on his honeymoon. He does not say He does not mention his wedding.

When Jesus speaks later in the text, he speaks to the multitude and notes what he says: (14:25-26) “Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” Jesus was, of course, saying that the person who does not have much more love for Me than them cannot be my disciple.

Notice that they all make excuses, and there's a difference between excuses and reasons. Sometimes, you can make an excuse when you don't have any real reason. Benjamin Franklin said, “He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else.”¹⁴ Now, all these excuses demonstrate that the world, its riches, and the pleasures of life are seemingly more important than being in the Kingdom of God. I have heard that “Excuses are tools of the incompetent which create monuments of nothingness. Those who specialize in them are seldom good in anything.”¹⁵ The sad occasion is that the excuse-makers perhaps think there is more time and there will be other opportunities and more than likely receive another invite. But Jesus says that the host, in his anger, says to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ 22 And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ 23 Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may

C. Sreechinth, *Legendary Quotes of Benjamin Franklin* (Distributed via Smashwords, 1901), P. 77

¹⁵ Taylor, Phil, and Peter Bain. “Subterranean Worksick Blues’: Humour as Subversion in Two Call Centres.” *Organization Studies* 24, no. 9 (November): 1487–1509. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840603249008>.

be filled. 24 For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.”

Now is the time for community outreach. Now is the time for revivals. Now is the time for evangelizing neighborhoods. Go out and compel them to come. One does not believe the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind would have excuses; they will love receiving such an invite. So this group would not display any excuses, only barriers and the feeling of inadequacy of attending such a great dinner. Undoubtedly, they had an understanding of etiquette and even felt as if they were not properly clothed to even attend. This is why there is a need to be compelled to come. This phrase compels them to come in not by force of arms but by the persuasion of arguments. In our context, this is where we lack individuals who are willing to receive the necessary training so they can make this compelling argument. We have volunteers who speak up and sign up but will not show up.

If we eradicate the lack of servant volunteers in our church, we will be able to enhance our outreach efforts within the community. This would involve sharing the gospel and the various programs and services that God has bestowed upon us. With more support, we would have the capacity to engage with people in various settings actively, encouraging them to partake in the activities within the Lord’s house, thus ensuring its vibrant and bustling presence.

Conclusion

If we could eradicate the lack of volunteers (Servants) in the church, we would increase our efforts to better reach the community by sharing the gospel and the programs

and services God has given us. We would be better at going out into the highways and hedges and compelling individuals to come in so that the Lord's house may be filled.

The fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke tells the story of Jesus being invited to a Sabbath dinner party, where he engages in a conversation with the guests about etiquette and the nature of God's kingdom. This chapter emphasizes the importance of humility and the proper way to conduct oneself in social gatherings. It also highlights the need for unity and cooperation within the church community to fulfill its mission of spreading the gospel and serving others. Jesus uses parables centered around dinner and feasts to convey valuable lessons about humility and avoiding self-importance. One of these parables specifically addresses the issue of seating arrangements at a wedding feast, teaching the importance of humility and avoiding seeking the highest position. This detailed account in Luke chapter 14 provides valuable insights that resonate with people to this day.

In this scenario, Jesus paints a vivid picture for his guest, highlighting the potential for an uncomfortable situation. Imagine finding oneself seated at the head table, but without belonging there. Perhaps the host, an enslaved individual, or a servant might approach and apologize, explaining that there is no place for one at the table among the esteemed guests. This would result in the person being escorted from the head table and relegated to a less distinguished table towards the back. As this unfolds, all eyes in the room would be on the individual, with whispers circulating among the banquet attendees.

During a Sabbath dinner, Jesus shared some valuable advice with his host. He suggested that his host should not limit his invitations to only friends, family, and wealthy neighbors who could offer something in return but should also invite others.

Jesus then shared a story with the dinner guests to emphasize his point. In the story, a man prepared a lavish supper and invited numerous distinguished individuals. The host in the story was symbolic of God, while the servant who invited the guests represented Jesus, the Son of God. The first group of invitees who declined the invitation and made excuses represented the Jews. They were the people who were already following God's teachings, but they refused to accept Jesus' invitation to join him in his mission. The later guests who were invited and attended the supper symbolized the Gentiles. They were the people who were not familiar with God's teachings but were willing to accept Jesus' invitation and join him in his mission. This story highlights the importance of being inclusive and welcoming to all, regardless of their background or status, just as God is welcoming to all who come to him.

The host duly dispatches the final invitations to the guests via an announcement, urging them to attend the supper as all arrangements have been made. Despite repeated requests to the courier, who acts as the servant, to convey apologies and ask for excuses from the guests, only a few oblige. While the text solely highlights the role of one servant, it is clear that there were other behind-the-scenes staff involved in the preparations. It is evident that this parable is an allegory for the Kingdom and an invitation to partake in the grand feast in the kingdom of God.

Moving forward, let us consider an alternate point of view regarding the story. The text highlights that all aspects of the event are now in place and given the grandeur of this dinner, a multitude of preparations were required. As previously mentioned, the servant in the story symbolizes Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In line with the teachings of the Apostle Paul, we are ambassadors of Christ and it is as if God is making a plea

through us: "We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." As representatives of Jesus Christ on earth, we bear the responsibility of seeking out those who are lost and guiding them towards reconciliation with God. The passages also provide insight into the individuals whom we ought to be reaching out to.

Our church community is dedicated to addressing various needs through our diverse resources and ministries. However, we are facing a significant challenge due to the shortage of dedicated volunteers to help us fulfill the many obligations required to support our mission. Our efforts have been hampered by the lack of available volunteers who can help us reach out to the community and share the gospel. To combat this issue, we have decided to focus on a specific project that seeks to increase our outreach efforts and ensure we can offer valuable programs and services to our community. Our ultimate goal is to inspire more people to volunteer so we can make a meaningful impact and fulfill the mission that God has entrusted to us.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Fresh Wind Christian Center church is currently facing a significant shortage of volunteers. This excursion continues by identifying a theme or hypothesis based on the synergy of servant volunteers' professional and spiritual areas within the context of the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. The hypothesis was the starting point of the research on the problem faced. The problem is that Fresh Wind encompasses very few committed servant volunteers, resulting in a minimum number of service offerings to our church and community.

The ministry does not have enough trained and equipped willing servants. My hypothesis solves this problem. If we had enough trained servant volunteers, this would increase the number of service offerings we provide. The hypothesis states that if the participants receive the volunteer training, then this will increase the number of volunteers and eradicate the lack of servant volunteers.

In the past, volunteers played a crucial role as the face of the church, but their absence is keenly felt in the current post-pandemic environment. This situation prompts us to delve into the challenges the church experienced with volunteers before the pandemic and to consider the potential repercussions of the current volunteer shortage on the congregation and the services offered to the community. By examining the historical context of this issue, we may gain valuable insights. It's worth contemplating whether we

need to adapt to a new normal where the church may struggle to find enough committed individuals to serve.

Would addressing the shortage of servant volunteers in the church enhance the church's ability to reach the community effectively with the gospel and the various programs and services that are intended to benefit the community? One would think this is possible. Having enough servant volunteers in the church would greatly enhance the services provided to both the church and the local community. The presence of an adequate number of servant volunteers would greatly influence the services provided to both the church and the community. Addressing the shortage of volunteers in the church could lead to improved efforts to connect with the community, share the gospel, and effectively deliver the programs and services that are part of the church's mission.

The present circumstances pose a distinctive challenge: despite having a full congregation, the task of recruiting sufficient volunteers remains arduous. It appears that in-person attendance has been impacted by the convenience of live streaming, online worship, virtual bible study, and Zoom meetings, resulting in difficulties in securing enough volunteers, irrespective of the congregation's size.

The scripture in Hebrews chapter ten instructs us to "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Many of the questions raised do not have solid answers or solutions. In many areas of our ministry, some have abandoned their post and are simply no-shows on Sundays.

As mentioned previously, it is common for individuals to commit to an event or task but ultimately fail to follow through. This issue would not be a topic of discussion if we had a surplus of reliable volunteers at our disposal. In such a scenario, we could easily inform those who do not show up that their presence is no longer required. It would be ideal to tell the absentees, "You are no longer needed for this task." You are fired.

Addressing pressing needs such as feeding the hungry, providing clothing, and offering essential resources to the community requires physical presence and direct engagement. These vital tasks cannot be effectively carried out through virtual platforms such as Zoom or other media. However, the church, with its physical space and the compassionate hearts of its communities, has numerous opportunities to address these pressing needs.

The associated ministries of Fresh Wind Christian Center Church are facing challenges, including a shortage of dedicated volunteer support. This deficit is significantly impeding the church's capacity to effectively address the needs of its congregation and the broader community. I was intrigued when I came across a passage in the Bible that highlighted a significant need for people to get involved in serving others. However, it pointed out that not enough individuals are willing to step up and dedicate their time and energy to this critical work.

Jesus said it best to his disciples in Matthew 9:37 "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into

His harvest.¹ He further stated in John 4:35 Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! 36 And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 For in this the saying is true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ 38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.”

The upcoming first section will first delve into a comprehensive examination of historical and contemporary challenges backed by evidence that have had enduring impacts on us. It will also contemplate potential future hurdles for volunteers and church servants.

Secondly, this section will cover Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International's 40 years of principles and work, including Dr. Bell's obedience to God's call to be a "Pastor's Friend" to pastors within the Body of Christ.

In the final part of this segment, we will delve into Fresh Wind Church's comprehensive strategy to tackle the shortage of servant volunteers within the church and ministry. Please note this section will elaborate on drawing from the strong foundation provided by the Ministry of Helps and Volunteers to establish a robust, dynamic, and influential volunteer ministry. This approach aims to cultivate a culture of volunteer service that not only enriches the church but also has a positive impact on the wider community.

¹ Matthew 9:37 New Living Translation (NLT).

Historical and Current Aspects

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015) defined volunteers “as persons who did unpaid work” (para. 2). In the most traditional sense, this has not changed. Thoits and Hewitt² identified volunteer work as work “in or for the community, where time and effort are given for the betterment of the community in general or for specific subsets of the community members in need”. Individuals who committed their time, talents, and treasures were considered not to be themselves but others in need. One’s commitment would rise above the “what’s in it for me” attitude for the sake and benefit of others. One would say, it is good for a volunteer to achieve such a level of commitment. A committee to the community.

The Bible speaks many times of doing what is good. Titus 3:14 Titus 3:14 And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful. Galatians 6:9 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have the opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

2 Thessalonians 3:13 As for the rest of you, dear brothers and sisters, never get tired of doing good.³ If one follows scripture, one would know and understand that the reward for doing good may not be instantaneous; however, in time, from another source or place, the reward for doing good is inevitable. No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. This quote is from the famous story *The Lion and the Mouse*,

² P. A. Thoits, and L N Hewitt, *Volunteer Work and Well-Being: Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 42, no. 2: 115–31.

³ 2 Thessalonians 3:13 New Living Translation (NLT).

wherein a small Mouse caught by the Lion is released rather than eaten as a kindness.

Later, the Mouse comes across the Lion trapped in a net.⁴

The Mouse remembers the kindness done to him by the Lion and chews through the ropes, freeing the Lion and returning the kindness.⁵ The story's significance is that there is no one so lowly that they cannot be of some use and that none should be scorned for their lowly position or life. The late Pastor Monroe Williams, would often say, "It is good in everyone; you just have to find it. One would believe the good in us would be the driving force behind our commitment to become volunteers. It's a universal truth that every individual, regardless of their background or circumstances, has the potential to do good."

The American expression of volunteerism can be traced back to the beginning of settling the North American continent. Today, the American volunteer ethic continues to be strongly positioned in Protestant religious values. In 1620, the Mayflower Pilgrims began settling in the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts. Nearly 10 years later Christians from the same congregation began settling in the Salem area and these settlers fell victim to an outbreak of scurvy. It was then that Dr. Samuel Fuller volunteered to travel from the Plymouth Colony to render aid to those in Salem. In a letter of gratitude, the colonists outlined their perception of Dr. Fuller's motivation as "the outward form of God's worship". In this letter, we see that the early settlers of America perceived worship of God as a core reason for serving humanity.

⁴ John Aesop, Esten Keller, and L. Clark Keating. *Aesop's Fables: With a Life of Aesop. Studies in Romance Languages*, (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1993) 34.

⁵ Brad Sneed, *Aesop's Fables*, (New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2003), 31

As significant mobilizers of volunteers within communities, churches foster a sense of belonging and shared values. Active involvement in church activities often leads individuals to become more willing to volunteer in their local areas, creating a sense of community and shared purpose. This not only benefits individuals but also contributes to the overall cohesion of the community. This suggests that there is a profound connection between participating in communal experiences, like attending a neighborhood church, and feeling a strong connection to shared values.

It seems that people are more likely to volunteer when they feel a sense of social cohesion and actively engage with their community, a connection that is nurtured by church participation. This, in turn, strengthens the fabric of the community and promotes a sense of collective responsibility.

Starting in the 1750s, the term “volunteers” was used to describe civilians who were called upon to serve in the military during times of crisis. These military volunteers were not conscripted or compensated for their service back then. In contrast, contemporary soldiers are paid professionals and are not categorized as volunteers.⁶

What are the defining characteristics of a servant volunteer in context?

The following segment discusses the context of Fresh Wind Christian Center Church and its volunteers. However, volunteers are not limited to the church; our

⁶ Katie Donihoo, "Best Practices and Strategies Used by Church Leaders to Mitigate and Prevent Burnout among Church Volunteers," January 2017.
https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/etd/890?utm_source=digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu%2Fetd%2F890&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages

communities have many volunteers from every population sector. At some point, an individual may or may not know someone who has volunteered in some capacity.

Let us run through a list of individuals in the local church and community performing in a volunteer capacity. The retired executive on the same block teaches baseball to the underprivileged in a high-poverty area.

My high school principal also served on the board of directors of a local nonprofit. Think about the off-duty police officer who participates in their neighborhood crime watch. Additionally, each election season you may see a retired couple working at the voting site.

I was amazed one day years ago seeing my high school physics teacher serving as an usher greeter in church. How about the most popular type of volunteers, like the Salvation Army Bell ringers stationed at one's local Walmart Superstore during Christmas? Of course, this list could go on and on, but I think you get my point. Volunteers have been the heartbeat or as I mentioned earlier, the life blood and foundation of the functioning of churches and communities.

In modern and biblical Hebrew, the term volunteer is derived from the word נָדַב *nādab*, meaning "to willingly give, To volunteer," which may also be interpreted as "free offering."⁷ The Bible in Judges 5:2 says, "When leaders lead in Israel, When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the Lord! In times past, volunteers have graciously followed great Pastors and leaders. If the church has a lack of volunteers and servants (as we do in our context), leadership must be empowered and equipped with the tools,

⁷ James Strong, *The New Strong's Complete Dictionary of Bible Words*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1996), P. 448.

resources, and information to succeed in recruiting, training, developing, and implementing volunteers and servants to serve as worshippers and willing workers.

The second segment will share the 40 years of principles and work of Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International from his book *The Ministry of Helps Handbook—How To Be Totally Effective Serving in the Ministry of Helps*.⁸ Secondly how Dr. Bell obeyed the call of God to be a “Pastor’s Friend” to Pastors within the Body of Christ. Finally, how important it is to have a vision for the Helps Ministries.

Theology pastors and families in the local church. Because of his faithfulness and commitment to serve, God has anointed him to teach in the Ministry of Helps. In 1986, Dr. Buddy Bell founded the Ministry of Helps International, Inc. (MOHI) in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is the president of the Ministry of Helps International as well as a successful author and international teacher. His focus is the much-needed message of the Ministry of Helps. His insights into this Bible ministry have enabled countless people to find and fulfill their place in the Body of Christ.

Dr. Buddy Bell has traveled to over 3,000 churches, teaching and helping church staff and congregations to work together with far greater effectiveness by awakening them to the power and plan of the Holy Spirit for accomplishing the work of the ministry. Dr. Bell has trained thousands of ushers and greeters thru the Serve Workshop and has held hundreds of Team Workshops around the world. Now with the help of live broadcasting, video and audio podcasts and video conferencing Dr. Bell is fulfilling the vision of being on thousands of church staff around the world. Dr. Bell's teachings are

⁸ Buddy Bell, *The Ministry of Helps Handbook: How to Be Totally Effective Serving in the Ministry of Helps*. [Rev. and updated], (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House. 1990), P.15.

used in over 25,000 bible schools in 70 plus languages around the world. Notice a few comments and compliments shared from some of the world's leading pastors about Dr. Bell and the Ministry of Helps International, Inc.

The Bible in 1 Corinthians 12:28" says And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

Our church and ministry will greatly benefit from Dr. Buddy Bell's book. It is awesome that help is cited as one of the ministry gifts following miracles and gifts of healing! However, so many of us do not see help as a ministry the same as the Lord does. The Apostle Paul and the Holy Spirit emphasize help as a ministry but most churches (including our church at Fresh Wind) often think of help as duties and labor or some may feel as if it is an obligation.

How unfortunate that many in the congregation consider those in the ministry of helps or church volunteers, servants as individuals with special gifts and talents and abilities but in reality, they are just ordinary people following Jesus' example and serving.

Luke 22:27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.⁹

There are other times people think of those working and serving in the ministry of help, like those who always miss the service or missed the sermon or missed the great singing from the choir. When a parent comes after the worship service has ended to pick up their child from the nursery, they often look at the workers as those who missed it.

⁹ Luke 22:27 New Living Translation (NLT).

Some will go as far as stating this to the workers. Maybe you have heard someone say, “we had a great service, the Holy Spirit moved!” While the truth is they should be saying “thank you for ministering to my child so I could attend the service, you do a wonderful job!”

This segment focused on the foundational principles of Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps and volunteers in the church. How can one implement the above practices for a healthy, vibrant group of volunteers for both church and community impact? The online ministry of cfaith in their article “How Teams Are Built” had this to say about Dr. Bell, “Dr. Bell has traveled to over 3,000 churches teaching and helping church staffs and congregations awake to the power and plan of the Holy Spirit for accomplishing the work of the ministry through every believer. Each meeting, every seminar, and every place Dr. Bell has traveled throughout this country and around the world, the greatest question asked is “What is the Ministry of Helps?”

Dr. Bell travels and has developed many ministry methods of serving churches and ministries to put into practice. We will high five points that Dr. Bell implements in all his seminars and conferences. Of course, he offers much more but for the benefit of our context, these will be the focus.¹⁰

- I. Defining the Ministry of Helps
- II. The Purpose of the Helps Ministry
- III. One Who Gives Assistance

¹⁰ Bell, Dr Buddy, “How Great Teams Are Built” - Cfaith. June 3, 2014. <https://www.cfaith.com/how-great-teams-are-built/>.

- IV. Not Everyone Is Called to be an Apostle, Prophet, Teacher, Evangelist, or Pastor
- V. The Disciples Had Helps Ministries

Defining the Ministry of Helps

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:28. As mentioned earlier how awesome it is that helps is cited as one of the ministry gifts following miracles and gifts of healings! The ministries listed are designed to help the church grow. The Apostle continues in verse 29 revealing how these ministries operate and assist in healthy Church growth. 1 Corinthians 12:29 says "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

Dr. Bell teaches that all the jobs designated by the Lord must be done if God's goal for His family is to be reached. Merriam-Webster defines help as giving assistance or support to (someone): to provide (someone) with something useful or necessary in achieving an end.¹¹ If you are born again, you are part of God's family. As part of the family of God, have you ever wondered what your place might be in the family? Or have you ever wanted to be able to help your brothers and sisters in the Lord? ¹² W.E. Vine

¹¹ Definition of HELP." [www.merriam-Webster.com. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/help.](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/help)

¹² W.E. Vine, Merrill F Unger, and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson. 1985), 301.

defines help as, “One of the ministrations in the local church, by way of rendering assistance, perhaps especially of help ministered to the weak and needy) .

One notices that Dr. Bell does not provide a specific definition of help in his book, however, he recalls one day an usher approached him after one of his meetings and shared this definition with me him and he stated his mouth flew open and his jaws dropped. One might imagine the heavens opened with bright lights and angelic voices singing in the background. He said this usher spelled out: “H” — having, “E” — enough, “L” — loving, “P” — people, “S” — serving. Helps is “Having Enough Loving People Serving” in the church. One desires to be one of those loving people serving.

Each of us should desire to be a part of this work in these last days. Dr. Bell presents the question, “If I am in the help ministry, who do I help?” Or if I am a servant volunteer, who do I serve? One would think that if I were a part of the Ministry of Helps, I would be helping God almighty above in heaven. If I serve in a local congregation, I serve the people of God. Our service and contributions are being made to the Kingdom of God. However, we at Fresh Wind seek to help and directly assist our bi-vocational Pastor. Dr. Bell describes the Ministry of Helps as like fingers on a hand when aiding and helping the Man of God.

The Purpose of the Helps Ministry

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:11,12. Have you ever wondered why God set apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in the Church? Dr. Bell

mentions in his book that Paul made it clear in his letter to the church at Ephesus that the ministry gifts were put in the Body of Christ for one main purpose: to perfect (or mature) the saints. People who are maturing, growing up in Christ, will exhibit two qualities:

1. They will build up and add to the welfare of God's family, the Church.
2. They will learn to minister — to help or serve — others.

You can tell the genuinely mature Christians in every situation by those who help the pastor, not hinder him. Given the opportunity through your prayers and support, God will enable your pastor or pastors to equip and perfect you with everything you need to function supernaturally in the ministry of helps.¹³ Have you established your purpose in ministry? Or are you one of those individuals who see all of the helps ministry workers as those who missed it?

One Who Gives Assistance

God set the ministry of helps in the Body of Christ, as we saw from 1 Corinthians 12:18. Helps is a supernatural ministry with its supernatural anointing to serve God by serving His pastors and His people. The definition of helps we described earlier plainly states “one who gives assistance.” Picture this. What if you had a friend who called and indicated that they needed your help? Could you provide the help they need? Suppose you are a mechanic, and your friend's car breaks down. You would gladly assist because you know how to fix cars, and your friend needs you to fix the car.

¹³ Bell, Buddy, *The Ministry of Helps Handbook, How to Be Totally Effective Serving in the Ministry of Helps* (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 2009), 69-70.

I suggest this is how you should view your purpose or calling in Christ's body. You have the gift or skill, and the Pastor has a need. That will keep your pastor from having to do it.

I Peter 4:10 says: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Not Everyone Is Called to be an Apostle, Prophet, Teacher, Evangelist, or Pastor

When I was growing up as a young boy in the church, we would seldomly hear someone has been called to ministry. Well, everyone just knew they were called to preach. Well, have you paused to think that God has many different callings? Maybe this person was called to work in the ministry of cleaning and sanitizing the church. We should do need it during the time of the pandemic. Have you considered someone may be called to work security in the parking lot? I know many members of the congregation could appreciate not having their cars vandalized.

Dr. Buddy says “Another thing that is important to remember is that God sets each member where He wills, not where the member wills. God knows where you will be the most effective in caring for His people. When every part does its job, there is no division in the church body. You may not be the pastor, but God will give you a similar vision.

The Disciples Had Helps Ministries

In Matthew 10:5-8, Jesus sent out the twelve disciples. Why did He not go Himself?

Like any other shepherd, Jesus was only one man. He could do only so much by Himself. God gave Him the ministry of helps to expand His ability to minister to the people in all of the towns and villages to which He went.

One has to know if Jesus and the disciples had help ministries, what would make you exempt? The Bible says: Luke 8:1-3 NIV After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; 3 Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their means.

A large group of followers often accompanied Jesus during his ministry. For some of the individuals he healed, he said go and be on your way. However, there were other times the bible says, "They followed him in the way"

Volunteers:

- Consider themselves just helpers. Help when it is convenient.
- Are hesitant to make decisions.
- Do not see themselves as essential parts of the church or ministry. Fail to see the true reward in serving.

Servant volunteers and the Ministry of help

Realizing their area of service is a ministry, servant volunteers know they are a vital part of the church and ministry. They know they have been empowered to minister

within the guidelines set forth by the Pastor and leadership. Each servant volunteer understands that their service is building up eternal rewards. It is essential to recognize the distinction between individuals who choose to volunteer primarily based on personal convenience and those who are dedicated, trained, and commissioned as servant volunteers. This final segment will focus on the foundational strength the Ministry of Helps and Volunteers provides in the church for a healthy, vibrant ministry of servant volunteers for impact on both the church and community.

The ministry of helps and servant volunteers are the foundational strength of the ministry and ambassadors of the church. Their part is vital to the church's in-house and community work. The Pastor and staff must be willing to spend time recruiting, training, managing, maintaining, and rewarding volunteers to create a robust and healthy foundational strength in the church. Dr. Sir Walter Mack suggested "categorizing volunteers on what they can offer according to the ministry's needs." Churches operating without committed servants as volunteers would not have the same impact on congregations and communities. "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many" Mark 10:45.¹⁴ As mentioned in an earlier segment, God has called upon Christians to be servants in the Kingdom of God.

Future hurdles for volunteers and church servants.

Thom Rainer shares some inspiring suggestions concerning servant volunteers when one considers the future challenges ahead in the local church and congregation. He

¹⁴ Mark 10:45 New International Version (NIV)

states Church leaders must consider every decision based on the new realities of the post-quarantine world. That's what it means to align with the future. For example, when staff members leave, consider how to replace (or not replace) them with the needs of the emerging new culture in mind. If your church has been busy maintaining a lot of programs, consider whether some need to be eliminated or moved to a digital platform.

As your church makes decisions about facilities, consider the new realities of the gathered and scattered church. If your church decides to increase the emphasis on small groups, consider whether there are new and better ways for people to gather.

In other words, the rules have changed in the post-quarantine era. Get ready to adapt.

One church leader handled a personnel issue with foresight and creativity. When the associate pastor retired during the pandemic, the lead pastor looked toward the future. Instead of replacing the retiring pastor with another associate pastor with the same job description, the church decided to add a teaching pastor whose primary responsibilities would be the church's digital ministries.

As of this writing, the church has three good candidates. Not surprisingly, all three are relatively young and already proficient in digital technologies. By rethinking the needs of their church and their community, the leaders are able to pivot to a new ministry approach.”¹⁵

¹⁵ Thom S. Rainer, and Recorded Books, Inc, *The Post-Quarantine Church: Six Urgent Challenges and Opportunities That Will Determine the Future of Your Congregation. A Church Answers Resource* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020), P. 90.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have reviewed historical and modern challenges with enduring effects. Additionally, we have delved into potential future hurdles for volunteers and church workers. Our examination has encompassed Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International's four decades of principles and work, as well as an exploration of Fresh Wind Church's comprehensive strategy to address the scarcity of volunteer workers within the church and ministry.

The text discusses the historical and contemporary challenges facing volunteers and church servants. It emphasizes the importance of volunteer work for the betterment of the community and highlights the connection between volunteerism and religious values. The role of churches in mobilizing volunteers and fostering a sense of community is also explored. Additionally, the text delves into the defining characteristics of volunteers in today's context and recognizes the widespread presence of volunteers across various sectors of society.

Secondly, the text further delved into the teachings and initiatives of Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International. It underscored the significant influence of the Ministry of Helps and the pivotal role played by volunteers within the church. Dr. Bell's teachings centered on elucidating the purpose of the Ministry of Helps and the notion that not everyone is called to conventional leadership positions. Additionally, it emphasized the importance of having a clear vision for the Helps Ministries and the far-reaching impact of the Ministry of Helps on both the church and the surrounding community, instilling a sense of purpose and potential in the audience's service.

The investigation Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International, shedding light on the significant impact of the Ministry of Helps and the vital role of volunteers within the church. It underscored Dr. Bell's teachings on the purpose of the Ministry of Helps and the importance of establishing a clear vision for Helps Ministries. Moreover, it emphasized the extensive influence of the Ministry of Helps on the church and the local community, fostering a sense of purpose and potential in the volunteers' service. Additionally, the article discussed the purpose of the Ministry of Helps and the role of those providing assistance while also highlighting the presence of help ministries among the disciples and stressing that not everyone is called to traditional leadership roles like apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, or pastors.

Finally, this segment aimed to focus on the Future hurdles for volunteers and church servants. Thom Rainer suggested that church leaders should align their decisions with the new realities of the post-quarantine world. This includes considering whether to replace staff members based on the needs of the emerging new culture, evaluating the necessity of current programs and potentially moving some to a digital platform, and taking into account the new realities of the gathered and scattered church when making decisions about facilities. Additionally, there should be consideration for new and better ways for people to gather if the church decides to increase the emphasis on small groups.

Rainer emphasized the importance of assessing whether some of the church's multiple programs should be discontinued or transitioned to a digital platform, given its active management. When making decisions about church facilities, it is crucial to consider the evolving dynamics of the church congregation, both when gathered and

dispersed. If the church prioritizes small groups, it is worthwhile to explore new and enhanced methods for bringing people together.

The post-quarantine era has brought about a change in rules, requiring preparation and adaptation. Church leaders need to handle personnel issues with foresight and creativity, particularly as volunteers may move on during the pandemic. The focus should be on looking toward the future.

Through a comprehensive reevaluation of the needs within their church and the surrounding community, the leadership has effectively implemented a new strategy for their ministerial efforts.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

This journey began by identifying a theme or hypothesis based on the synergy of servant volunteers' professional and spiritual areas within the context of the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. The hypothesis was the starting point of the research on the problem faced. The problem is that Fresh Wind encompasses very few committed servant volunteers, resulting in a minimum number of service offerings to our church within the walls and community outside of our walls.

The ministry does not have enough trained and equipped willing servants. My hypothesis solves this problem. If we had enough trained servant volunteers, this would increase the number of service offerings we provide. The hypothesis states that “if the participants receive the volunteer training, then this will increase the number of volunteers and eradicate the lack of servant volunteers.”

An additional text used to support this foundation was John Chapter Three. This profound biblical text provided support and served as a solid foundation to undergird the hypothesis and the theme for this project. The passage indicates that when Jesus speaks of the 'laborers,' he is most likely referring to dedicated followers of Christ who are ready to actively share the gospel and selflessly serve others within this ministry. The research hinges on this comprehension, which aligns with our objective of bolstering the ranks and increasing the number of servant volunteers within the walls of our church and the

immediate community. A continued examination of Dr. Buddy Bell as a historical example of the church's Ministry of Helps and Volunteers. Dr. Bell offered valuable insight into how to implement models and proven practices for building a healthy, vibrant group of servant volunteers who can make a positive impact on both the church and the community.

The text discussed Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International, highlighting the Ministry of Helps' significant impact and the crucial role of volunteers in the church. It also emphasizes Dr. Bell's teachings on the Ministry of Helps' purpose and the importance of establishing a clear vision for Helps Ministries. Moreover, it emphasized the extensive influence of the Ministry of Helps on the church and the local community, fostering a sense of purpose and potential in the volunteers' service.

The article also delved into the significance of the Ministry of Helps and the responsibilities of those providing assistance. It emphasized the existence of help ministries among the disciples and underscored that not everyone is destined for traditional leadership roles like apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, or pastors.

The theological foundations section provides a comprehensive overview of the theological framework that underpins this document's content. This doctoral project will draw upon both systematic and practical theology to address the pressing issue of volunteer shortages in the church and strengthen discipleship programs and services.

Systematic theology will emphasize Jesus's outreach and impact on humanity, while practical theology will explore how we, as followers of Jesus, can effectively engage in leadership and service under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

When systematically considering discipleship and mentoring, it becomes evident that Jesus is our ultimate teacher and mentor.

Systematic Theology

Systematic theology involves the methodical and organized study of various topics found in the Bible, with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of these concepts. It delves into fundamental questions regarding the nature of the church, the concept of sin, the biblical perspective on creation, and the attributes of God. Through extensive study of the entire Bible, Christians have sought to address these inquiries by categorizing and analyzing its teachings on these subjects. This comprehensive exploration of biblical teachings has led to the establishment of doctrines based on the guidance provided in the Bible. These doctrines are then systematically arranged according to their respective themes, forming the practice of systematic theology.

¹Wayne Grudem offers multiple definitions of systematic theology in his book *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. His primary definition revolves around the study that seeks to answer the question, "What does the entire Bible teach us today about any specific topic?" Although comprehensive, the definition of systematic theology allows for exploring alternative approaches. This definition indicates that systematic theology involves collecting and understanding all the Bible's relevant Bible passages and then summarizing their teachings clearly so that we know what to believe about each topic.

¹ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan. 2009), p. 21.

It entails gathering and comprehending all relevant passages in the Bible, followed by synthesizing their teachings to offer a clear framework for understanding various topics. This systematic methodology has been pivotal in our church's discipleship and mentoring programs. Nevertheless, it's essential to acknowledge that there may be more context-specific methods for recruiting more servant volunteers. Paul writes to the Philippians, Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (Phil. 2:5–7). This new view was called the “kenosis theory,” and its overall position was called “kenotic theology.” The kenosis theory holds that Christ gave up some of his divine attributes while he was on earth as a man. (The word κενόσις is taken from the Greek verb κενόω, G3033, which generally means “to empty,” and is translated “emptied himself” in Phil. 2:7.) According to the theory Christ “emptied himself” of some of his divine attributes, such as omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence, while he was on earth as a man. This was viewed as a voluntary self-limitation on Christ’s part, which he carried out in order to fulfill his work of redemption. We must acknowledge that the text does not indicate that Christ “emptied himself of some powers” or “emptied himself of divine attributes,” or anything of that nature. Additionally, the text clarifies what Jesus did in this act of “emptying”: he did not do so by relinquishing any of his attributes, but rather by “taking the form of a servant.” This means he came to live as a man, and “being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil. 2:8). Therefore, the context itself interprets this “emptying” as equivalent to “humbling himself” and assuming a lowly status and position.

Consequently, the NIV translates the phrase “He emptied himself” as “but made himself nothing” (Phil. 2:7 NIV). This notion of emptying includes a change in role and status rather than in essential attributes or nature. This causes us to reflect on the foundational text of Jesus, emptying himself of his robe and embodying the towel.

Practical Theology

Therefore, the upcoming chapter will follow a systematic approach and strive to present a more practical and applicable perspective on the study of theology.² James Poling, in his book *The Abuse of Power*, describes Practical theology as “critical and constructive reflection within a living community about human experience and interaction, involving a correlation of the Christian story and other perspectives, leading to an interpretation of meaning and value, and resulting in everyday guidelines and skills for the formation of persons and communities. He further states that as a social transformation, “Practical theology is a theological interpretation of the unheard voices of personal and community life for continual transformation of faith in the true God of love and power toward renewed ministry practice. In his book entitled *Christian Theology*, Millard Erickson presents a similar definition for practical theology. He states, “Theology is to be practical. By this we do not mean practical theology in the technical sense (i.e., how to preach, counsel, evangelize, etc.), but the idea that theology relates to living rather than merely to belief. The Christian faith gives us help with our practical concerns. The practical effect or application of a doctrine is a consequence of the truth of the doctrine,

² James Poling, *The Abuse of Power: A Theological Problem* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991) 285.

not the reverse.”³ In the given text, it is interesting to observe how Gruden's approach highlights the reasons behind our involvement in theology, whereas Polin delves into the methods and ways through which we engage in theology.

Gruden's perspective offers valuable insights into the importance of engaging with and adhering to the teachings of the Bible, understanding and standing up for our beliefs, and embracing and honoring God. On the other hand, Poling's approach outlines a practical strategy for implementation. By integrating these theological viewpoints, we can deepen our understanding of God's relationship with us through His Son, Jesus, and how we can apply this framework to guide and support current and future servant volunteers at Fresh Wind Christian Center Church.

In his book, *Following Christ: Losing Your Life for His Sake*, Charles Spurgeon states, “You cannot have Christ if you will not serve Him. If you take Christ, you must take Him in all His qualities. To become His disciple, you must also become His servant. ‘Spurgeon further states, all of you who would like to have Christ as your Savior, that you must be willing to serve Him. We are not by serving Him, but we are saved to serve Him. From the moment we are saved, we ought to live in the service of our Lord. If we refuse to be His servants, we are not saved, for we evidently still remain the servants of self and the servants of Satan.

In Christian tradition, the act of sharing the gospel and serving others within this ministry is often likened to a 'harvest,' with the followers of Christ being viewed as the

³ Millard Erickson, J., *Christian Theology*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2007), p. 27.

⁴ C.H. Spurgeon, C. H., *Following Christ: Losing Your Life for His Sake*, Revised edition (Abbotsford, WI: Aneko Press, 2018), p. 7.

'laborers' who work to bring in souls for God. This involves welcoming people, showing them love, and serving them in a manner that reflects God's grace and compassion.

It is important to note that this interpretation focuses not on physical labor or servitude but on spiritual efforts and evangelization. The central theme is to prioritize spiritual pursuits of servanthood and the dissemination of religious beliefs rather than emphasizing manual labor or servitude.

Some individuals within our church and possibly in other churches or religious institutions (however, I can only speak for our church) may perceive the role of a servant leader as conferring them with specific authoritative responsibilities that are not typically associated with this position.

I grew up in a tight-knit rural Baptist church where my father served as the pastor. Within the church community, there were several individuals who held significant leadership roles. These included deacons responsible for various aspects of church administration, trustees who oversaw the church's assets, presidents of different organizations within the church, as well as finance and correspondence secretaries who managed crucial financial and communication tasks. Additionally, there were administrative assistants and other leaders who played essential roles in the functioning of the church community.

However, throughout the workweek, these individuals were engaged in their regular occupations, encompassing various roles, including factory workers, grocery store clerks, assembly line workers, mechanics, and farmers. I would like to make it clear that I am not attempting to downplay the significance of working individuals. I am specifically addressing the qualifications required for leadership.

The leadership positions within the church should be tailored to suit their respective vocations. I think it is important to consider the potential ethical and moral implications if an individual who works in the financial banking sector aims to take on a leadership role in the church's financial department without fully embracing the teachings of Christ. This could raise questions about their ability to align their professional responsibilities with their spiritual beliefs and the potential conflicts that may arise as a result. As I have previously stated, this lack of genuine commitment could potentially cause conflict within the walls of the church, making a severe impact on the dedication of servant volunteers under their leadership.

According to the teachings of Christ, true commitment to serving others stems from a deep commitment to serving Christ. In the book of John, Jesus emphasized the importance of serving Him, stating that those who do so will be honored by His Father. This underscores the notion that our dedication to Christ is intrinsically linked to our commitment to serving others.

Remember, Spurgeon said, “You must not simply take Jesus as a Friend, but you must also take Him as your Master”. When you choose to make Jesus your master, you willingly become His servant, as Spurgeon aptly pointed out. It is essential for an individual to understand before they desire to serve men, they must be a servant of Christ.

Jesus said to his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Matthew 16:24. While both Spurgeon’s and Jesus’ statements sound relatively simple, they carry much more weight than some people are willing or even able to carry.

In John chapter 13 Jesus said to His Disciples, “12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.”⁵ Aubrey Malphurs, in his book *Strategic Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry*, adds to both sentiments by stating, “If we were to put discipleship into a beaker and boil it down to its essence, what would we find? I think we would find servanthood, the very essence of discipleship. Disciples are servants. In John 12:26 Jesus associates “followership” with servanthood and stresses the importance of servanthood. Discipleship is all about service. And in Matthew 20:26–28 Jesus uses his own example of what servanthood looks like: “whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Disciples of Christ are first his servants, who are willing to serve even to the point of death—the ultimate form of service.

In ⁶Andrew Murray’s book *Abide in Christ*, Murray speaks of Christ’s interaction with His disciples. He notes, “His infinite humility—as it sees the meekness and lowliness with which He seeks to win for Himself a place as their servant, wholly

⁵ Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategic Disciple Making, A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Pub. Group, 2009). 72.

⁶ Andrew Murray, *Abide in Christ* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 2002). 153.

devoted to their interests—it accepts with gladness His command, “Ye should do as I have done to you” Following His example, each lives not for Himself but for the other. The law of kindness is on the tongue, for love has vowed that never shall one unkind word cross its lips. It refuses not only to speak but even to hear or to think evil; of the name and character of the fellow-Christian, it is more jealous than of its own.

When individuals are not fully committed to Christ, they may encounter resistance to transformation in different aspects of their lives. In our church, we strongly encourage all servant volunteers to engage in an additional weekly Bible teaching session, in addition to attending the Sunday worship service. This could involve participating in a Bible class, joining a small group study, attending a Sunday school class, or taking part in any other Bible lessons offered by our church.

The foundation of our church's volunteer service is centered around deepening our connection with God. We believe that this connection is fostered through a profound relationship with Jesus Christ and by seeking guidance from the Holy Spirit. Our commitment to serving others is rooted in our belief in self-denial through practices such as fasting and prayer, as well as seeking God's direction for our individual roles. Our spiritual journey is further enriched by our annual Seven Day Consecration Fast, during which we dedicate ourselves to drawing closer to God. Additionally, we observe a 40-day fast leading up to the celebration of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday, emphasizing the significance of this event in our faith.

One of the general requirements from the Pastor to all our staff and servant volunteers is to participate in the upcoming fasting period. This time is dedicated to profound self-reflection, earnest prayer, genuine sacrifice, and sincere repentance. It

allows us to unite and pursue spiritual renewal and growth. I am confident that through this dedicated period of fasting and prayer, we can draw nearer to God and encounter a deep sense of spiritual rejuvenation.

Jesus emphasizes in the Bible the practical implications of two fundamental commandments for humanity. The first is to "love God with all your heart, soul, and mind," emphasizing the importance of wholehearted devotion to a higher power. The second commandment is to "love your neighbor as yourself," highlighting the significance of compassion and empathy towards others. This compels us to carefully consider and actively seek out tangible ways in which Christians can demonstrate love and serve others within the church and the broader community, fostering a culture of kindness and support.

Matthew 22:34-40 (NIV) says, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." In this Gospel of Matthew, the portrayal of the relationship between the Father and His Son and the relationship between Jesus and his disciples distinctly mirrors the sacrificial nature of Christ's crucifixion and the profound impact it had on his followers.

When contemplating an image of the cross of Christ, it is essential to understand that it embodies both vertical and horizontal dimensions. The vertical dimension signifies systematic theology, emphasizing our relationship with God and the entirety of biblical teachings about serving and volunteering. On the other hand, the horizontal dimension

represents practical theology, delving into our interactions with others and how we can effectively apply these teachings in real-life situations.

The provided text emphasizes the symbolic nature of our relationship with both God and our fellow human beings. It highlights the distinction between what we receive from God and what we can offer in return through our service to others.

The cross is a powerful symbol constructed of two intersecting beams. The upright beam is firmly placed in the ground and extends upward toward the sky, symbolizing the connection between earth and heaven. It represents God's work in justifying humanity and our relationship with Him.

The vertical beam of the cross, with its upward and downward orientation, represents the directions of north and south. This shows that the cross is a powerful symbol connecting the earthly world with the divine. It highlights the deep connection between the physical and spiritual aspects of life.

The horizontal beam, supported by the upright beam and extending from east to west, symbolizes the sanctification process initiated by God after we have been justified. This sanctification process not only impacts our relationship with God but also influences our interactions with our fellow human beings.

Interestingly, the first three of the Ten Commandments focus on our obligations to God and are encapsulated in Jesus' primary and paramount commandment to love God. These commandments address our vertical relationship with God. The last six of the Ten Commandments pertain to our duties toward our fellow human beings and are summarized in Jesus' second commandment to love our neighbors, illustrated in Matthew 22:39.

These commandments concern our horizontal relationship with others. Jesus emphasized that His Law is fundamentally about love—loving God first and then loving our neighbors. A deep passion for the Lord must drive a person’s commitment to becoming a fully committed servant volunteer. In a more systematic model, one would first have a genuine internal expression of love for the Lord, in return, developing a love of the Lord and externally expressing this love as a servant volunteer for others. However, this chapter will focus on seeking, planning, and executing a more theological application of creating servant volunteers.

Therefore, this chapter investigates a few aspects that outline the true nature of the combination of systematic and practical theology, examines some past and present examples, and explains how they relate to this Doctor of Ministry project.

The study of this dual pair can be approached by exploring a portion of the history of the Christian church and its relationship to Jesus Christ's teachings. The foundation of the church's history can be traced back to a pivotal conversation with Peter, one of Jesus's closest disciples. This conversation played a significant role in shaping the early Christian church and its theological principles. They were in the villages of Caesarea Philippi; Jesus asked his disciples, “What are people saying about who the Son of Man is? (Asking about himself). Some of the disciples stated that people think you are John the Baptizer, others say you are Elijah, and some say Jeremiah or one. Jesus then turns to Peter with the same inquiry and states. “Who do you think I am”? Simon Peter said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. A few verses down in the text Jesus replies to Peter and says “That thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matthew 16:18.

⁷John MacArthur, in his Macarthur New Testament Commentary, Matthew 16-23, notes that Jesus points out at least seven features and characteristics of the church that He builds. He speaks of its foundation, certainty, intimacy, identity and continuity, invincibility, authority, and spirituality.

For the sake of this study, our focus will only point at the foundation. `Jesus set forth the foundation of the Church, which is where we will give the greatest focus: And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church. Jesus no longer called him Simon Peter; he now says, “You are Peter”. Jesus endorsed Simon as Peter, the “Rock,”. Jesus's statement confirms that Peter would be influential in establishing Jesus' Church. Peter's future resume is quite impeccable regarding the early church.

- On the day of Pentecost, Peter was the central spokesperson to the mockers gathered in Jerusalem accusing them of being drunk with new wine. (Acts 2:14)
- Under Peter's leadership, the Church launched an inflow of around 3,000 new believers filled with the Holy Ghost (verse 41).
- Peter was present with John and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Ghost (Acts 8).
- Peter was led to go and preach the gospel at the home of Cornelius where he and other non-Jews believed and received the Holy Ghost (Acts 10).

Some may argue that Peter was a dedicated volunteer who made the selfless decision to leave behind his successful fishing career in order to serve Christ and spread

⁷ John MacArthur, *Matthew 16-23, The Macarthur New Testament Commentary*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 55.

the gospel. His commitment led him to engage with and minister to individuals from three distinct cultural backgrounds: Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles. Through his tireless efforts, he played a significant role in fostering unity and creating an inclusive community within the Church.

Within a systematic theological framework, the argument is made that Jesus bestowed authority upon Peter by entrusting him with the keys to the kingdom of heaven. From a practical theological standpoint, Peter, empowered by the Holy Spirit, exercises this authority in the book of Acts, assuming a pivotal role in the early church. Nonetheless, this perspective has not been immune to criticism. The remainder of the New Testament underscores that Christ alone is the rightful foundation and leader of His church, prompting inquiries into the scope of Peter's authority.

Another rationale for selecting this pragmatic approach is its emphasis on implementation and application. It involves engaging with Fresh Wind's culture to directly impact the church, ministry, and the local community. This approach focuses on putting theory into action and engaging with Fresh Wind's culture to positively influence the immediate community.

In the early days of the New Testament church, a significant influx of new members led to rapid growth within the community. However, this growth also led to tensions between the Greek-speaking believers, known as "Hellenists," and the Hebrew-speaking believers. The Hellenists felt that their widows were being unfairly treated in the daily food distribution, which caused friction within the congregation.

As a result of this disagreement, the Twelve, referring to the twelve apostles, called for a meeting of the disciples to address the issue. During the meeting, it was

collectively recognized that while caring for the widows and the poor was important, it was equally crucial not to neglect the primary responsibilities of preaching and teaching the Word of God. This decision was made to ensure that the essential spiritual needs of the community were not overshadowed by the necessary care for vulnerable members.

This discussion led to them choosing seven men from among the congregation whom everyone trusted, men full of the Holy Spirit and good decision-making abilities. These men would be assigned the task of calming and reducing the conflict that fueled the disagreement. As a result, this allowed the disciples to stick to their assigned tasks of prayer, teaching, and preaching God's Word." (Acts 6:3).

When considering the systematic exploration of the biblical perspective on the influence of servant volunteers, in conjunction with the practical theory and pragmatic principles related to the recruitment, training, and deployment of such servant volunteers, it becomes evident that the active involvement of servant volunteers enables pastors and teachers to dedicate themselves exclusively to the dissemination of the gospel of Christ.

In Acts chapter 6, we are presented with a captivating narrative that beautifully illustrates the integration of systematic and practical theology with the essence of the gospel message. This story vividly demonstrates the seamless connection between theological precepts and their tangible, real-world implementation. Let's examine the early disciples and see how they delegated responsibilities.

About this time, when the number of disciples was continually increasing, the Greeks complained that in the daily distribution of food the Hebrew widows were being given preferential treatment. The twelve summoned the whole body of the disciples together and said, "It is not right that we should have to neglect preaching the Word of

God in order to look after the accounts. You, our brothers, must look round and pick out from your number seven men of good reputation who are both practical and spiritually-minded and we will put them in charge of this matter. Then we shall devote ourselves whole-heartedly to prayer and the ministry of the Word.”

5-6 This brief speech met with unanimous approval and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochurus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch who had previously been a convert to the Jewish faith. They brought these men before the apostles, and they, after prayer, laid their hands upon them.

7 So the Word of God gained more and more ground. The number of disciples in Jerusalem very greatly increased, while a considerable proportion of the priesthood accepted the faith.

The early Christian Apostles chose to entrust the responsibility of managing the financial affairs to the deacons, allowing themselves to focus on prayer and the ministry of the word. They carefully selected individuals, including the notable deacon Stephen, to oversee the distribution of food and handle accounting matters. This decision demonstrated the Apostles' commitment to efficient delegation and the importance of having reliable individuals in positions of responsibility. These seven individuals were specifically selected and appointed to contribute to the unity and restoration of peace within the church, as part of their service to the body of Christ.

⁸Robert Schnase in his book *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* states “Ordinary Christian servants takes many forms. Keeping the church alive and fulfilling

⁸ Robert C. Schnase, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. Revised and updated. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2018), 151.

its purpose requires the active and regular service of everyday disciples. The impulse to serve, animated by the spirit of God in Christ, causes people to give time generously to help with ushering or parking, assist in the kitchen, sing, pray, serve on monthly planning teams, visit the sick, or hospitalized people, mentor a youth group, help with children's ministry, transport passengers to and from church, help with cleanup around the church. Such basic and ordinary service is the lifeblood of the body of Christ. The phrase "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:" (Ephesians 4:12) means that faith communities encourage, prepare, and cultivate such ordinary service so the ministry of Christ thrives.

In each of the described areas, a qualified servant volunteer must fill the capacity. Schnase further states, "The responsibility falls to all who love the church to use their talents and energy. Making ourselves useful for the purpose of building the body of Christ imbues our lives with purpose and connects us to others. Genuine and generous service makes a difference.

In the current social climate, congregations are finding it more and more difficult to recruit sufficient volunteers, regardless of their size. The impact of the pandemic has resulted in a significant decrease in the motivation of numerous members of the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church to take an active role in community service, indicating a change in their level of involvement compared to the period before the pandemic.

Although my next statement may sound traditional and maybe somewhat cliché, each week during our Zoom prayer meeting and bible study, we pray to God a two-part prayer. The first part of the prayer is that God will raise individuals from within our membership to assist and help fill the void of and eradicate the lack of loving servant

volunteers. The second part of the prayer is that God will send new people from the north, south, east, and west to assist and help fill the void.

Currently, Fresh Wind Christian Center Church provides a variety of programs and services to its community. However, the organization is facing a shortage of volunteers to adequately support and maintain these initiatives. This challenge is not only about the limited availability of volunteers, but also about the need for comprehensive discipleship and mentoring. Such support is essential for addressing the underlying issues contributing to the insufficient number of volunteers serving within the organization.

Perhaps in other congregations, individuals are generously contributing their time, skills, and resources; I can neither deny nor confirm. Nevertheless, at Fresh Wind, we do not observe the same enthusiastic response as the proactive and wholehearted dedication exhibited by the biblical figures who promptly heeded the voice and call of the Lord.

Genesis 22, verse one tells us that after a series of events, God tested Abraham by calling out to him, saying, "Abraham!" In response, Abraham humbly said, "Here I am." This raises the question of whether Abraham was aware that he was being tested. In my opinion, I don't think he realized it was a test; rather, I believe his response was driven by faith and obedience.

Genesis 22, verse one recounts that after a series of events, God tested Abraham by calling out to him, saying, "Abraham!" In response, Abraham humbly said, "Here I am." This biblical passage raises an intriguing question about Abraham's awareness of being tested. In my view, I don't think he realized it was a test; rather, I believe his response was driven by unwavering faith and obedience to God's call. This demonstrates Abraham's deep commitment and trust in God, regardless of the circumstances.

In Exodus chapter three, we read about the moment when the Lord saw that Moses turned aside to see a strange sight - a bush that was burning but not being consumed by the fire. It was then that God called out to Moses from the midst of the bush, saying "Moses, Moses." In response, Moses humbly replied, "Here am I." This interaction between God and Moses raises the question: Did Moses know in that moment that he was about to be chosen and used by God to lead the Israelites out of bondage? It seems unlikely. Instead, it appears that Moses responded with faith and obedience, not fully comprehending the incredible role he was about to play in delivering God's chosen people.

In the book of 1st Samuel, chapter three recounts the account of God calling Samuel in the night. The passage describes how "the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel." Samuel responds, "Speak; for thy servant heareth." It raises the question of whether Samuel, at that moment, had any inkling that God was about to use him as a child to accomplish something in Israel that would cause a great stir. It seems unlikely. Rather, it appears that Samuel answered God's call out of faith and obedience, without fully comprehending the significance of what was to come.

Throughout the pages of scripture, one can find a multitude of call-and-response passages that offer deep insight into the relationship between humanity and the divine. These poignant exchanges between individuals and the divine highlight the profound connection between faith and action. However, it is crucial to pause and reflect on what could be considered the most impactful response from all the responders in the Bible.

In Luke 1:38 ESV, Mary's response to Gabriel is a profound declaration: "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."⁹ This moment captures Mary's extraordinary faith and willingness to submit to God's plan. It's remarkable to consider whether Mary fully grasped the magnitude of her role in giving birth to the savior of the whole world, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Her response, however, reflects a deep, unwavering trust in God's will, showcasing a faith that surpasses human understanding. This unwavering trust is a testament to Mary's profound spiritual strength and devotion to fulfilling the divine purpose set before her.

"Jesus emphasized the importance of serving and following him, stating, "Whoever serves me must follow me. Wherever I am, there my servant will also be. My Father will honor whoever serves me" (John 12:26 CEB). This passage highlights the reciprocal nature of serving and following Jesus. Additionally, it underscores the significance of mentorship and discipleship in our journey of faith. As we strive to follow and serve Jesus, we are called to actively train and mentor others, guiding them to follow in our footsteps as we ourselves follow Jesus."

Conclusion

The theological foundation portion of this doctoral project utilized systematic and practical theology to address volunteer shortages in the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. Systematic theology involves the study of various topics found in the Bible to gain a deeper understanding of these concepts.

⁹ Luke 1:38 English Standard Version (ESV)

Practical theology, a branch of theology that focuses on the practical application of religious beliefs and principles in personal and community life, is used for the continual transformation of faith.

Practical theology, a discipline that resonates with our daily lives, seeks to provide a theological framework for understanding and interpreting personal and community experiences. It is a beacon of hope, exploring how individuals and communities can apply religious beliefs and principles to address contemporary challenges and foster spiritual growth.

The integration of various theological viewpoints allows us to gain a more profound comprehension of the relationship between God and humanity through His Son, Jesus. The chapter adopted a systematic approach, while also endeavoring to offer a more pragmatic and relevant outlook on the exploration of theology.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

The research journey began with the meticulous identification of a central theme or hypothesis, focusing on the intersection of professional and spiritual elements within the roles of servant volunteers. This exploration was conducted within the context of the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. The hypothesis formed the basis for delving into the underlying issue, which is the insufficiency of committed servant volunteers at Fresh Wind, resulting in a shortage of support.

The ministry needs additional trained and committed volunteers willing to serve. My hypothesis proposes a solution to address this issue. By increasing the number of trained servant volunteers, we can expand the range of service opportunities we offer. The hypothesis posits that providing volunteer training will increase the number of volunteers and alleviate the shortage of servant volunteers.

John Chapter three was meticulously analyzed for additional support and used as the foundation for the project. This critical passage supports the hypothesis and establishes the central theme of the endeavor. It suggests that Jesus, when referring to 'laborers,' is speaking about dedicated disciples of Christ who are ready to actively spread the gospel and selflessly serve others within the ministry.

This interpretation is crucial for our research as it aligns with our urgent aim of strengthening our church and community through an expanded group of servant volunteers who can bring about significant positive change as 'laborers.'

Dr. Buddy Bell was investigated as a historical illustration of the church's Ministry of Helps and Volunteers. Dr. Bell provided valuable perspectives on implementing effective models and established practices for cultivating a robust, active team of servant volunteers capable of making a positive difference in the church and the community.

The theological foundation of the doctoral project integrated systematic and practical theology to tackle the challenge of volunteer shortages at the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. By incorporating a systematic approach, this section offered a comprehensive and well-structured theological viewpoint while also providing practical and pertinent insights tailored to the church's specific needs.

The practical aspect of the approach involved applying religious beliefs and principles to individual and community life, thereby developing practical solutions to address the volunteer shortages.

The continuation of this project aims to explore and promote interdisciplinary foundational theory in specific subjects. Interdisciplinary studies involve a cognitive approach where individuals or groups draw upon knowledge from multiple disciplines to deepen their understanding of complex challenges. This collaborative nature of the study ensures that everyone feels involved and valued. This knowledge will then be applied to the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church issue, addressing the shortage of servant volunteers serving the church and community.

¹Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon once wrote the following thoughts in their book *Resident Aliens*: “We are not called to help people. We are called to follow Jesus, in whose service we learn who we are and how we are to help and be helped.”

James 2:14-17 (NIV) says, “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Hauerwas and Willimon, prominent theologians, posit that a wholehearted commitment to Christ results in the Holy Spirit inspiring and guiding us on a daily basis to actively assist and serve others. This underscores the idea that our faith journey is not merely an individual pursuit, but rather a transformative call to demonstrate compassion and engage in purposeful actions within the framework of our relationships with those in our immediate surroundings. This perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of faith and service, highlighting the profound impact of living out one's faith through practical compassion and meaningful engagement with others.

Jesus said in Matthew 20:28 NIV “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”²

¹ Stanley Hauerwas and William H Willimon, *Resident Aliens, Life in the Christian Colony*, version *Expanded 25th-anniversary edition* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2014), p. 101.

² Matthew 20:28 New International Version (NIV)

This chapter aims to construct a detailed and all-encompassing interdisciplinary foundational model. This will involve extensively investigating diverse business, situational, and adaptive leadership theories. The primary aim is to develop a model that provides robust support, addresses the lack of servant volunteers, and empowers the church and ministry to more effectively cater to the needs of the congregation and the immediate community of the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church.

In light of this project's extensive nature and the multitude of potential avenues for expansion and enhancement, we will investigate two non-church-themed models.. The first part of this chapter is extracted from *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* by Ken Blanchard, Patricia, and Drea Zigarmi.³ This theory is a reflection and change made a number from the original Situational Leadership model Blanchard developed with Paul Hersey.⁴ in the late 1960s. The second part will highlight the service-level volunteer model of The Museum of the Bible, founded by Steve Green, President and CEO of Hobby Lobby, Inc.

This section delves into two main topics: the four leadership styles outlined in Ken Blanchard's "One Minute Manager" and the service-level volunteer model adopted by the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. The four leadership styles - directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating - showcase how they can be used to recognize that team members have different leadership needs. While treating each team member as an

³ Kenneth Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi. *Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness through Situational Leadership*. 1st ed (New York, NY: Morrow, 1985), 72.

⁴ Paul Hersey, Kenneth H Blanchard, and Dewey E Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Leading Human Resources 10th ed* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2010), 121.

individual is important, it's also crucial to acknowledge that they may not all require the same approach. This principle also extends to churches that oversee volunteer workers, highlighting the need for a supportive structure for their leadership.

Just as there are different tiers of employees in various industries, there are also varying levels of members within a congregation. This diversity underscores the importance of selecting volunteers based on their skills and abilities, a fundamental aspect of effective leadership.

In an article in “Lifeway Research Church Life & Ministry,” “Five types of people in your church,” Brent Bullard stated that our memberships are similarly comprised of at least five categories of church people. He states there are five different types of people in your church. First is the Generational — “I will be here forever.” This type of person describes an aunt of mine. Both sweet and faithful, she felt that her church had had many challenges over the years. Times when they did not have a Pastor but she and a small group of others remained steadfast and unmovable. Her continual, consistent testimony was that her family was instrumental in starting this church in the early 1900s and no matter the changes, she’s not going anywhere. My aunt is a generational member. The next type of member is the confrontational — I’ll be back once you’re gone. Whether the confrontation is between pastor and member or member and another member, most congregations bear the scars of relational conflict.⁵

Many of these are personal rather than spiritual. As a child growing up in a traditional Baptist church, we saw this more than once or twice. Members would indeed

⁵ Brent Bullard, “Five Types of People in Your Church” Insights: Church Life & Ministry,” Feb 28, 2022, <https://research.lifeway.com/2022/02/28/>.

have differences with the Pastor or other members and leave the church with the attitude of, “we can work together at the local factory, and we can shop together at the local stores, but we will not worship God together at the same church.” Bullard goes on to say a physical return to church will not occur until another’s departure. Number three, there is the recreational — “I’ll be here when I want.”

This type of member became more prevalent in our context and maybe other churches (I cannot say) after the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people believed (and some still do think) that worshipping at home with family is a valid replacement for regularly attending church. Bullard says, “Perhaps we shouldn’t be surprised when a noticeable portion of our members take on this casual, American mindset of coming and going as they please.” In addition to the stay-at-home worshipper, the church competes with the Sunday funday or my only off-day mindset. Many members will attend church as a “if I can fit it into my schedule” rather than a necessary element of spiritual growth and worship. The fourth type is relational — “I’ll be here as long as they are”. Relationships are invaluable.

Whether it involves interactions between friends, pastors and their congregants, or small group leaders and their members, it is evident that relationships hold great significance. This dynamic was demonstrated in my church in 2013. Two years prior, a minister, his wife, and several of their loved ones became part of our congregation. Subsequently, a conflict arose between the minister's wife and one of the youth leaders. As the pastor, I made concerted efforts to convene meetings with all involved parties to facilitate resolution and reconciliation. Unfortunately, the minister's wife was deeply distressed and refused to participate in subsequent discussions.

This same year a significant event occurred at our church when the minister, his wife, and their associates decided to leave. Their departure had a profound impact on the church as they influenced others with whom they had formed close relationships also to leave. This departure caused a ripple effect within the church, affecting the individuals directly involved and the larger church community.

The fifth and final type of member is the devotional — “I’ll be here because He’s honored. “ The first generation of Christians was marked by a devotion to God’s Word and the gathering together with the local church. Much can be argued about the early church, but their devotion is uncontested. Luke describes the church this way: “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Every congregation is made up of individuals who come together to worship. According to Bullard, there is a specific type of member who attends not out of ignorance but because they are deeply involved in the actions and deeds of the other members. They gather because they believe the Word is accurately interpreted, participate in faithful praise of God, and witness the administration of His ordinances. These members are committed to following the teachings of the cross rather than being swayed by the crowd's opinions.

The congregation comprises individuals with diverse backgrounds, personalities, and needs, so leaders must recognize the importance of tailoring their approach to each person. When managing volunteers in the church, it's essential to understand that different leadership styles are necessary for different individuals, as indicated by the four leadership styles. This means that leaders should adapt their approaches based on the unique developmental level of each person. It's important to acknowledge that the church

is composed of people with a wide range of gifts, callings, and capabilities, and effective leadership involves recognizing and nurturing these diversities.

Therefore, implementing Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zigarmi four styles of leadership are not only necessary but beneficial to the servant volunteers at Fresh Wind Church. This implementation is vital not only in our church but also in other churches and non-profit organizations. We have placed many faces in the wrong places because of the lack of individuals willing to become servant volunteers. People serving where they are not qualified but they are available. In an article in Lead Magazine, “Why Some Are Disqualified for Serving in the Lord’s Work,” Joe McKeever gives some compelling reasons why some people are disqualified to serve. Not everyone is qualified to serve and lead in the Lord’s church– “to serve and to lead.” McKeever states, “In the Lord’s work, serving and leading often consist of the same activities, performed by the same people.” The Lord’s best servants are the congregation’s best leaders. Those who lead best are humble servants willing to stoop and wash their feet or rise and lead the charge, whatever the situation requires. The list of factors that disqualify people from serving and leading in the Lord’s church is endless, as it would include unbelief, a carnal lifestyle, moral problems, criminal records, a history of violence, and so on. However, there is a more selective list of conditions that disqualify otherwise good and respectable church members from serving and leading:

You are not qualified to serve/lead if you are unwilling to work in the background without recognition. If you require recognition and appreciation, we will continue in our search for workers, thank you. It’s not that you might be required to work in the unseen background, but your unwillingness to do so says volumes about your spiritual condition.

You are unqualified to lead if you do not like change. If you get saved, you change. If you grow, you change. If you go to Heaven, you change big time.⁶

One must agree with McKeever that all growth brings change. I also add that a spiritual change should reflect spiritual maturity. People who are changed have a more significant impact on people who need a change. Servant volunteers should be willing to love like Jesus, learn from Jesus, and lead like Jesus. Jesus' ability and leadership style were versatile and diverse to all of His disciples. To help explain this idea more, this chapter, from a situational leadership perspective, uses the four leadership styles of Blanchard, Zigarmi, and Zigarmi to properly pair the many different leadership styles with the servant volunteers of Fresh Wind to produce more servants and eradicate the lack of volunteers.

The first style is Directing. This style reflects high directive behavior and low supportive behavior. In this style, the leader provides specific direction about goals, shows and tells how, and closely monitors the individual's performance in order to provide frequent feedback on results. When a leader uses the directing style, they are highly directive but low on supportive behavior. The leader in this case will tell the person what the goal is, what a good job looks like, set clear expectations and then lay out a step-by-step plan about how the job is to be accomplished. In this case the leader solves the problem and makes the decisions. The team member is merely carrying out the leader's ideas and instructions. Blanchard and Hodges describe how Jesus used an appropriate directing leadership style with these enthusiastic beginners when He first sent

⁶ Joe McKeever, "Review of Why Some Are Disqualified for Serving in the Lord's Work." Lead Magazine, April 16, 2023, 3.

them out for the first time to act as His Apostles.⁷ Jesus sent the twelve disciples out with these instructions: . . . “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received! Don’t take any money with you. Don’t carry a traveler’s bag with an extra coat and sandals or even a walking stick, don’t hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve to be fed.” —Matthew 10:5-10 NLT. This style is appropriate if a quick decision needs to be made. It is also a useful style for team members who are less experienced in an area and those who have some skills but may not be familiar with how an organization operates.

Example: When the leader of security in the church shares the exact sequence of the things the beginning volunteer needs to do before anyone arrives at the church on Sunday morning. This volunteer is motivated but lacks the skills and experience in church security. Therefore, the list of engagements will not change soon. The leader may show the volunteer the first or second time but does not need to continue showing this person the list of items required before any people arrive at the church. The leader tells the volunteer what the goal is and what a good job looks like but also lays out a step-by-step plan about how the task will be accomplished. You solve the problem. You make most of the decisions; the person you lead is responsible for following your direction or plan.

The problem was there would be no lights on before the people arrived, but the servant volunteer solved the problem with instructions from the leader. Ideally, this style should only be used with someone for a while till they develop more competence and are

⁷ Kenneth Blanchard, and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming Your Heart, Head, Hands, & Habits* (Nashville, TN: J. Countryman, 2002), 71.

able to do things with less or even no direction. Let's reiterate style one. Directing is for motivated enthusiastic beginners who lack competence but are enthusiastic and committed. These new servant volunteers need direction and frequent feedback to get them started and to develop their competence.

The next or style two is— Coaching.⁸ This style reflects high directive behavior and high supportive behavior. The leader continues to direct goal or task accomplishment but also explains why, solicits suggestions and begins to encourage involvement in decision making. For this style the leader continues to direct and closely monitor task completion by the team member but also explains their decisions to the team member, asks for their suggestions and supports them on their progress. It is still directive but less directive than the Directing style. The Coaching style combines both direction and support and it has more two-way engagement between the manager and a team member than the Directing style. In the Coaching style, the manager may ask questions and request suggestions but still end up making the final decision. When using this style, you provide a lot of support through listening and encouragement because you want to encourage risk-taking and proactivity.

Example: As the servant volunteer's competence increases, the leader slowly reduces the degree of directive behavior, ultimately to zero. As the servant volunteer's confidence diminishes, the leader slowly intensifies the degree of support provided. This helps the volunteer get through times of doubt and eventually regain a confidence born out of competence. When that confidence comes, the leader slowly reduces the degree of

⁸ Kenneth Blanchard, and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming Your Heart, Head, Hands, & Habits* (Nashville, TN: J. Countryman, 2002), P 41.

support provides until the volunteer is managing themselves. This coaching style will be implemented for volunteers who have developed some competence along with an improved commitment. The volunteer is not totally confident in their abilities but is getting there. At this point the leader still needs to focus on tasks and checklists which can still require significant commitment of time, but the focus can now expand to the developing relationship with the volunteer, building on the trust that has begun to develop and the encouragement that has been demonstrated. Again, the leader needs to spend significant time listening to the servant volunteer while offering feedback and advice.

The goal now is to engage the volunteers so they can build up to the next level. There is less “telling” and more “suggesting,” which leads to more encouragement, acting as a leader. The recognition that they have progressed motivates them to progress even further. Coaching is for disillusioned learners who have some competence but lack commitment. They need direction and feedback because they’re still relatively inexperienced. They also need support and acknowledgment to build their self-confidence and motivation, and involvement in decision making to restore one’s commitment.

The third leadership style 3 is - Supporting.⁹ This style reflects low directive behavior and high supportive behavior. The leader and the individual make decisions together. The role of the leader is to facilitate, listen, draw out, encourage, and support. This leadership style is high on supportive behavior but low on directive behavior. We will implement this style at Fresh Wind for the leader to support the volunteer’s efforts,

⁹ Kenneth Blanchard, and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming Your Heart, Head, Hands, & Habits*, (Nashville, TN: J. Countryman, 2002), P 42.

listen to their suggestions, and facilitate their interaction with others. The leader will also build up the volunteer's confidence and motivate them through encouragement and praise. Leaders using this style rarely explain to volunteers how they should solve a problem. Rather, they help team members reach solutions by asking questions that help them to expand their thinking and encourage risk-taking. This leadership style will be used mainly for facilitating and supporting the volunteer's efforts towards accomplishing tasks and sharing responsibility for decision-making with them. Now is the time to challenge them to excel.

According to ¹⁰Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zigarmi (BZZ), style three managers rarely talk about how they would go about solving a particular problem or accomplishing a particular task. They help their volunteers reach their own solutions by asking questions that expand their thinking and encourage risk-taking. As earlier stated, volunteers at different levels of development should be treated differently. This does not indicate you treat all volunteers differently; you treat the volunteers differently at different levels. Supporting is for capable but cautious performers who have competence but lack confidence or motivation. They do not need much direction because of their skills, but support is necessary to strengthen their confidence and motivation.

The fourth leadership style 4 is – Delegation. This is the fourth style and it involves the leader turning over responsibility for decision-making and problem-solving to team members. This style reflects low directive behavior and low supportive behavior. The individual makes most of the decisions about what, how, and when. The role of the

¹⁰ Kenneth Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi. *Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness through Situational Leadership*. 1st ed, (New York, NY: Morrow, 1985), 54.

leader is to value the individual's contributions and support his or her growth. Here the responsibility for solving day-to-day problems and making decisions is delegated. The Delegating style is low on both supportive and directive behavior. "In Style four you are turning over responsibility for day-to-day decision making and problem solving to the person doing the task.

The next steps in the situational leadership development is matching leadership style to development level. Before one can properly align and match leadership to development, there must be some goal setting. The first part of goal setting is to have the alignment conversation. BZZ notes, during that conversation the parties involved must not only agree on the goals but also on the performance standards for each goal, The goals would be rewritten in the form of an acronym SMART.¹¹ As we apply this to our context, the S stands for specific. Goals should state exactly what the volunteer is responsible for and when it needs to be done. The next is how performance is going to be measured in which the T, stands for trackable.

This is the order in which SMART goals are written—S, and then T. one must decide specifically what you want the person to do—the S—and then how you're going to track or measure progress toward goal accomplishment—the T. Now, you use the other three components of the SMART criteria—the R, A, and M—to check if the goal is truly SMART. The R stands for relevant. A goal is relevant if it addresses an activity that makes a difference for the church or ministry and the individual. To the individual, it feels like valuable work. Next, the A in SMART stands for attainable. The goals must be

¹¹ Kenneth Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi. *Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness through Situational Leadership*. 1st ed (New York, NY: Morrow, 1985), 27.

reasonable. Whether or not they're reasonable depends on what's happened in the past. What have been some of the church's experiences.

Were some of the goals too large? Were some of the goals not planned properly? Were some of the goals simply impossible? Many times, in our past we have set improper goals that were just not attainable for whatever reason. Finally, the M in the SMART model stands for motivating. For volunteers to do their best work, the goals that are set need to tap into what your servant volunteers enjoy doing. Often, we focus on creating the most favorable situations for motivation here. Are individuals learning and becoming more competent? Are they connected to their work and to other volunteers? Is the level of autonomy proportionate with their level of competence? These are some really important questions to ask. According to BZZ, SMART goals answer these questions:

S - Specific: What exactly is the goal or task?
When does the goal or task need to be accomplished?

M – Motivating: Is the goal or task meaningful for the individual?
Will working on this goal build competence and commitment?
Will working on this goal add or drain energy?

A – Attainable: Is the goal realistic, reasonable, and achievable?
Is the goal within the individual's control?

R- Relevant: Is the goal or task meaningful work for the organization?
Is the goal or task aligned with organization and work team goals?
Is the goal or task a high priority in relation to other goals?

T- Trackable: What does a good job look like at each level of development?
How will progress and results be measured and tracked?

SMART goals motivate. They get leaders and the people they lead on the same page.¹² Goal setting is a collaborative process. Remember, the responsibility for ensuring clear goals are set lies with the leader, but the more competent the individual, the more you want their voice to be part of the goal-setting process. By aligning SMART goals, you set up the conditions for effective day-to-day coaching. Once the SMART goals are set and you and your team member are aligned on them, the next step is diagnosing an individual's development level on a specific goal or task. There are four combinations of competence and commitment make up what is called the four development levels. Blanchard mentions the practical framework that will enable leaders to diagnose the development level of an individual for a task or an assignment are:

D1 – Enthusiastic Beginner; D2 – Disillusioned Learner; D3 – Capable, but Cautious, Contributor; and D4 – Self-Reliant Achiever.¹³

The next part of this theme will explore the volunteer service framework implemented by the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. This framework places a strong emphasis on service, with volunteers taking on vital roles in different aspects of the museum's operations, such as engaging with visitors, supporting educational programs, and aiding with events. Introducing a portion of this volunteer framework at Fresh Wind Christian Center Church aims to evaluate its adaptability and integration

¹² Kenneth Blanchard, Patricia Zigarmi, and Drea Zigarmi, *Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness through Situational Leadership 1st ed* (New York, NY: Morrow, 1985), 28.

¹³ Blanchard. 2024. "SLII® - a Situational Approach to Leadership." BLANCHARD. 2024. <https://www.blanchard.com/our-content/programs/slii>.

within a congregational and community setting. This initiative addresses the shortage of servant volunteer workers and bolsters efforts to engage the congregation and the community.

In association with the Museum of the Bible is the Hobby Lobby Stores Inc. Hobby Lobby is a prominent chain of crafts superstores offering a vast array of creative supplies and inspirations. As the largest privately owned crafts retailer in the United States, Hobby Lobby specializes in providing a diverse range of products for arts, crafts, hobbies, and various other specialty items. At its peak in 2012, the company operated 520 superstores across 42 states, making it easily accessible to a wide customer base. The Green family, who are the sole owners of the company, were ranked 79th on the Forbes list of the four hundred wealthiest Americans, boasting an estimated net worth of \$4.5 billion.¹⁴

The business, which is owned and operated by the Green family, is deeply rooted in Christian principles. The founder and CEO, David Green, made a deliberate decision to base the company's operations on biblical values. This includes playing Christian music in the stores and choosing to keep them closed on Sundays, allowing employees to prioritize family time and worship. An interesting reference point is the late 1980s, when the stores were generating approximately \$100 million in revenue on Sundays alone. Today, that figure has more than doubled, exceeding \$250 million.

In addition to giving Sundays off for each employee, as a gesture grounded in his religious beliefs, Green has raised the minimum wage for full-time employees by a dollar

¹⁴ Thomas Larson, "Hobby Lobby, Steve Green, and the New Bible Empire." *Free Inquiry* 35, no. 3, (2015).

an hour every year since 2009, with the result that their minimum hourly wage is currently \$15. Green shared with Forbes Magazine in 2012, “God tells us to go forth into the world and teach the gospel to every creature. He doesn’t say skim from your employees to do that.”¹⁵

Steve Green, the son of the founder and current president and CEO shares with Dr. Tim Clinton of the Dotson Library: Well and when you think of the servant leadership model, to some degree, Dad has always said the corporate office here is built to serve the stores and the stores are there to serve the customers. This servant leadership is our focus and, here is how do we best serve our employees. So that's what we're here to do, is to serve.¹⁶

Volunteer service framework.

The Museum of the Bible, situated in the heart of Washington, D.C., stands as a testament to the Bible's profound impact and historical significance. Established in 2010 by Steve Green, the President and CEO of Hobby Lobby, Inc., the museum was meticulously designed to meticulously document the rich narrative, history, and enduring influence of the Bible. Following years of thoughtful planning and dedicated development, the museum opened its doors on November 17, 2017, inviting visitors to embark on an enriching journey through its extensive collection.

¹⁵ Forbes Wealth Team. 2023. “This Billionaire Is a Donor behind the Jesus-Focused Super Bowl Ads,” Forbes, February 16, 2023. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kerryadolan/2023/02/13/this-billionaire-is-a-donor-behind-the-jesus-focused-super-bowl-ads/>.

¹⁶ Steve Green, “Steve Green Leaves His Mark on Washington,” Christianity Today, November 17, 2017, Volume 61,9. https://christianitytoday.com/ct/2017/november/steve-green-washington-museum-of-bible-interview.html?utm_medium=widgetsocial

Boasting a permanent collection of 1,150 items, the museum serves as a custodian of historical and cultural artifacts related to the Bible. Complemented by an additional 2,000 items on loan from esteemed institutions and collections, the museum offers a comprehensive and immersive experience for enthusiasts and scholars alike. With its diverse array of exhibits, the museum stands as a treasure trove, providing a deep and insightful exploration of the Bible's impact on society, art, literature, and more.

In 2022, the Museum of the Bible experienced a remarkable milestone as the total number of volunteer hours surpassed 4,500. The dedicated volunteers wholeheartedly immersed themselves in creating an engaging and transformative experience for the museum's guests, showcasing the profound impact of the Bible. These enthusiastic volunteers contributed in diverse capacities, playing invaluable roles in presenting the museum's celebrated collections, educational initiatives, and public programs to the visitors.

The Museum of the Bible places great emphasis on carefully selecting, training, and empowering dedicated individuals who play a crucial role in delivering an exceptional experience for the museum's visitors. Not only do these individuals contribute significantly to the museum's operations, but they also undergo substantial personal growth and development through their involvement. The servant-level model highlights the invaluable contributions of servant volunteers, providing them with opportunities to engage with guests, make meaningful behind-the-scenes contributions,

and experience personal development. This approach ensures a rewarding and enriching experience for every visitor while also fostering the growth of the volunteers.¹⁷

Qualification, recruitment, and training process model.

The qualification, recruitment, and training process model is outlined to where each applicant must be able to commit to a mandatory 4.5+ hours of training and demonstrate a strong dedication to the Museum of the Bible's mission, which is to encourage all individuals to engage with the transformative power of the Bible. Additionally, candidates should be willing to commit for at least one (1) year, be at least 16 years of age, have access to a computer and a valid email address, and possess basic computer and email skills for training, scheduling, and communication.¹⁸ We recognize your existing commitments and are prepared to collaborate to establish a flexible schedule.

Candidates should possess a strong desire to provide exceptional customer service to our guests and staff, excellent verbal communication skills, and a positive attitude. They should also be capable of standing for a minimum of four (4) hours with minimal assistance for specific roles, and be available during museum hours of operation, which include weekdays, weekends, and evenings. Furthermore, a willingness to be cross trained in various museum departments is highly valued.

¹⁷ Hicks-Keeton, Jill. "The Fantasy of 'the Bible' in the Museum of the Bible and Academic Biblical Studies." (2022). <https://doi.org/10.17613/k5pj-zv90>.

¹⁸ Crawford, Sidnie White, "The Museum of the Bible: A Critical Introduction." Review of Biblical Literature, (2020).

The Information Desk Volunteers play a vital role in furthering the museum's mission to engage all individuals with the transformative power of the Bible. Their responsibility is to ensure that every guest at the Museum of the Bible has an exceptional and memorable experience. This involves creating a welcoming atmosphere, providing valuable information about the museum's offerings, such as exhibitions, attractions, educational programs, dining, and more.¹⁹

Meanwhile, Guest Relations Volunteers are essential in ensuring that museum visitors have a positive experience. They are stationed at various locations throughout the museum and are often the first point of contact for guests. Their warm welcome and provision of information help guests begin and continue their journey through the museum. These volunteers represent the organization and strive to leave a lasting positive impression on guests.

In a similar vein, Guest Relations Volunteers also help answer guests' questions, provide assistance inside the exhibit, and encourage guests to interact with the activities using the provided devices. They also welcome and guide guests to events and, if necessary, assist with the check-in process.

This implementation at Fresh Wind will reveal how servant volunteers play an essential role in enhancing the overall visitor experience. To ensure each visitor is greeted with a friendly smile, a welcoming atmosphere will be created as soon as they step

¹⁹ Volunteer Service Areas | Museum of the Bible, Museum of the Bible, 2020.
<https://www.museumofthebible.org/volunteer-service-areas>.

through the door. The comprehensive and detailed explanations, along with the various available opportunities and necessary qualifications mentioned above, clearly demonstrate the ministry's firm intention to enhance and optimize the Fresh Wind Christian Center's church and ministry operations. Upon thorough and careful consideration, it becomes evident that neglecting or overlooking these crucial details could potentially have a significant and adverse impact on the overall effectiveness and success of the volunteer program.

Conclusion

This portion of the project explored and promoted the interdisciplinary foundational theories in specific areas to address the shortage of servant volunteers at Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. The project examined two non-church-related models, the One Minute Manager and The Museum of the Bible, to develop a model that can offer robust support and empower the church and ministry to serve the congregation and local community better. The chapter will emphasize the interconnectedness of faith and service, underscoring the profound impact of practicing one's faith through practical compassion and meaningful engagement with others. Beloved, let us love one another because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one

another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

This project was designed to satisfy the Doctor of Ministry requirements at United Theological Seminary. I facilitated it by creating and implementing a servant volunteer training program for the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church members. This final project was designed to help the participants become even better servant volunteers in the local church and community setting.

In addition, this project highlights how my personal history, ministry interest, and skills intersect with the challenges facing the Fresh Wind Christian Center in such a way that will facilitate effective ministry engagement. Specifically, as reflected in my Contextual Analysis, while our Sunday services are uplifting, exciting, and filled with a variety of praise and worship, attendance is meager, and there are not enough servant volunteers to carry out ministry service.

Therefore, this training will ultimately serve as a basis for future servant volunteer training programs, where these project participants will train young adults, adults, and seniors to participate in volunteer development and succession. I believe when in ministry, God calls you to a ministry context where your experience, education, and expertise are valuable tools to the ministry and or church to which you've been called. As a bi-vocational pastor, I believe God has used my experience, expertise, marketing and management, and customer service for over twenty-five years.

The overall goal of this initiative was to bolster our recruitment, training, and placement efforts to increase the number of servant volunteers who will play consistent roles in supporting the bi-vocational pastor. This will help alleviate the overwhelming nature of his duties, allowing him to devote more time and energy to ministering the word of God to the community. Our specific focus areas include addressing low attendance numbers, enhancing our recruitment strategies to address the shortage of volunteers, and optimizing the volunteer schedule to ensure better coverage and support. Through these targeted improvements, we aspire to enhance our outreach to the community and deliver our programs and services more effectively. In his book, *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, Dennis Bickers states, "Despite being told by various denominational leaders that their numbers of bi-vocational ministers were growing and are expected to keep growing, I could find no denomination with a staff person specifically designated to work with bi-vocational ministers and their churches."¹

Considering the Fresh Wind Christian Center's stagnant growth pattern in servant volunteers, I intended to glean from and merge my ministry interests and skills with the needs of the church's context. This alliance would help identify the contextual needs within the church and ministry and result in a reasonable yet radical methodology for not having enough servant volunteers to serve the church and the community.

With the expected outcome of training and developing servant volunteers at Fresh Wind Christian Center, the areas considered for biblical, historical, theological,

¹ Dennis Bickers, *The Art and Practice of Bivocational Ministry: A Pastor's Guide*, (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City), 2013, 20.

and interdisciplinary foundations all pointed toward challenging times of insufficiently trained servant volunteers. Each foundation is directed towards volunteers who are transitional servants who can adapt and make the same efforts in recruiting, training, and launching additional servant volunteers.

For the Biblical Foundation, the scripture of John 13:3-17 NIV

3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;

4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

10 Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."

11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

This scripture highlights the advantages and disadvantages to successive

12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them.

13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.

14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

It was important that the participants were aware that this project would assist in creating a culture of serving. Our outlook is, "Serving is who we are, and this is what we do." Serving and volunteering are bigger than this project—they are who Fresh Wind is and what we do.

The historical segment, current aspects, evidence of the issues that plagued us before and currently, and the foreseeable challenges ahead of us concerning volunteers and servants in the church. Secondly, it will share the 40 years of principles and work of Dr. Buddy Bell and the Ministry of Helps International and how Dr. Bell obeyed the call of God to be a “Pastor’s Friend” to Pastors within the Body of Christ. Finally, this segment will focus on the foundational strength the Ministry of Helps and Volunteers provides in the church for a healthy, vibrant ministry of servant volunteers to impact the church and community.

The Theological Foundation postures, such as systematic and practical theology, are used to address this issue. Systematic theology focuses on Jesus' outreach and pouring into man, while practical theology focuses on Jesus' leadership under the Holy Spirit. Practical theology is a critical and constructive reflection within a living community about human experience and interaction, involving a correlation of the Christian story and other perspectives. Systematic theology helps us understand and defend our faith, while practical theology provides the plan and implementation in a sense of application. The combined theology methods will reveal the relationship God has with us through His Son Jesus and how we relate to current and future servant volunteers within the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church.

The Interdisciplinary Foundation's goal was to provide an interdisciplinary model by investigating the different business, situational, and adaptive leadership theories that can help develop a model for serving volunteers at Fresh Wind Christian Center Church. The non-church theme chosen to explore for this chapter is extracted from Leadership and the One Minute Manager by Ken Blanchard, Patricia, and Drea Zigarmi. This theory

reflects the change made by a number of people from the original Situational Leadership model that Blanchard developed with Paul Hersey in the late 1960s. The chosen theme for this chapter will explore the four leadership styles of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. Managers in companies and organizations have used this theme with the understanding that, as a manager, you cannot lead everyone in your team the same way. According to Matthew 10:5-10 NLT this model of leadership also highlights the four leadership styles of Jesus

These foundations were selected to solve the problem of very few committed servant volunteers, resulting in a minimum number of service offerings to our church and community. The ministry does not have enough trained and equipped willing servants. The challenge is not simply a lack of vision when implementing programs and services. We are fortunate to have capable leaders ready to provide guidance, instruction, and mentoring to dedicated individuals eager to contribute and serve.

Methodology

During my tenure as Pastor of Fresh Wind Christian Center, I did not always view the importance of having enough servant volunteers until we started to grow. There were now more people joining than there were serving. It would remind you of an old-fashioned mom-and-pop-type grocery store. Pop would stop cutting meat and come over to ring your items up on the cash register. Or mom would stop stocking the shelves to come and assist you with candy for the children. They both were doing all the jobs in the store themselves. This is where we were; my wife and I did most of the church's jobs ourselves. We did not have enough loving people trained and serving.

My focus for this project was to be sure we could develop several current servant volunteer leaders and recruit some additional lay people to attend the training.

A blended group of leaders and laity will gather from various ministries of Fresh Wind to launch the project. Individuals will be strategically chosen from different areas of the church. These areas have the most impact on the local membership. The participants will be derived from the areas listed: Church administration, operations, media, men's, women's, hospitality, youth, and security ministries,

Ten individuals participated in the project. A portion of this group was already working in their various capacities, so there was no need for training for their current work. This project focused on training these individuals to recruit and launch additional servant volunteers in the ministry. The goal was to set up an accurate ministry model to exemplify how having enough servant volunteers trained and serving will impact the number of service offerings to church members, visitors, and the community immediately around us.

Three measurables were used to measure the participant's grasp of the information and the effectiveness of the project. This project's measurements were a pre and post-survey, six weeks of a bible study teaching series in conjunction with journaling and reflection, and ending with two focus group discussions.

The methods were incorporated into the sessions, with the surveys included before the first and after the last session. Each week, at the session's closing, the participants were reminded to include journal prompts during the week.

The pre and post-surveys were utilized to measure any changes resulting from the

teaching. Before introducing the content, the pre-survey gave a baseline of the participants' perspective on being a servant volunteer and their obligation to help future servant volunteers move into various capacities. Collecting this data would provide perception when the post-tests were completed into any change in attitude, perspective, or knowledge about servant volunteerism based on the sessions held.

For six weeks, I met with the participants to develop servant volunteers to increase the number of servant volunteers at Fresh Wind Christian Center, addressing their current lack of involvement. The trained servant volunteers would positively impact the ministry in-house and in the community.

Implementation

Ten individuals from various servant ministries of the church participated in the project. We were thrilled to have eight members actively in person and two members who live in other cities in attendance on the Zoom platform. This diverse group comprised four top leaders, two online members, and four laypersons. The participants were identified by numbers 1-10.

1. Participant One is a female online millennial member responsible for marketing and website personalization.
2. Participant Two is also a female online millennial member responsible for weekly online emails and current events.
3. Participant Three is a female middle-aged adult (Gen X: Born 1965–1980) currently in training to serve with the hospitality and greeter team.

4. Participant Four is a female middle-aged adult (Gen X: Born 1965–1980) currently in training to serve with the Youth dance and greeter team.
5. Participant Five is a female senior adult (Boomer: II, Born 1955–1964) currently serving on the praise team, bible class, Sunday School teacher, and kitchen committee.
6. Participant Six is a female middle-aged adult, 40–59 years old (Generation X, 1965-1980), a leader, serving on the praise team, cross-trainer teacher, and business administrator.
7. Participant Seven is a middle-aged male adult (Gen X: Born 1965–1980) currently serving as an audio engineer and training in live stream video.
8. Participant Eight is a female middle-aged adult, 40–59 years old (Generation X, 1965-1980), who is a leader and serves as the church operations manager, teacher and business administrator.
9. Participant Nine is a middle-aged male adult (Gen X: Born 1965–1980) currently serving as a video camera and live stream video operator.
10. Participant Ten is a female middle-aged adult, 40–59 years old (Generation X, 1965-1980), a leader serving on the praise team, Christian Education Director, teacher, and business administrator.

The selected participants completed a consent form and a pre-survey. The six sessions took on the format of Bible Study. The six-week one-hour sessions were held each Sunday at 8:15 am. Breakfast was served at 8 am each Sunday for the in-person participants. Completing this series of lessons ultimately helped and supported the participants' training and development. This project included content and teaching from

the Bible, which helped us better understand Jesus Christ's servant methodologies. The training consisted of teaching, conversation, and dialogue among participants. As each week passed, I noticed the creative synergy among all participants.

Session One

Our first session included an introduction that included an opening prayer. This opening prayer set the tone for each of the meetings. Each participant introduced themselves and briefly mentioned how their faith or spirituality influences their work or life. The next part of the session was an icebreaker and some small talk, and I also shared my intentions for what was upcoming. We talked about the hypothesis, the project's purpose, and the plan we would go through over the next six weeks.

The icebreaker activity was conducted to help everyone get to know each other better, create camaraderie amongst the group, and foster a more comfortable atmosphere. The icebreaker for this week was in the form of a question: What superpowers do you want to have and why? The participants also shared their expectations for the project and what they hope to achieve from participating in this project. We talked intensively tentatively about the project's purpose and what was expected from all parties involved. We assigned participant numbers because I didn't want to reveal the actual names of the participants, so each participant was given a participant number, starting with the number one and continuing through the number ten.

A detailed discussion was held regarding the project's goals, the purpose of the project, and the roles and responsibilities of all the parties involved. We also aligned calendars and schedules to plan the following meetings, which would be six meetings.

We discussed deadlines and milestones for the project and some small things that would be necessary throughout the project. For instance, I asked each participant to take some time during the week and reflect on what happened at the previous meeting.

Our first session was completed with composition and a brief projection of the following steps or expectations for the next week and meeting. I took some time to sigh deeply and was relieved that our first meeting was complete.

Session Two

Our second session opened with prayer, and this week, we added a weekly scripture, which we will continue to have each week. This week's scripture was taken from II Corinthians 5:17 AMP. Therefore, if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah), he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the Fresh and new has come!

The icebreaker question for session two was, "How would you describe your job to a five-year-old?" This week's lesson was Salvation. Reflecting on "His-Story" (Jesus) through a comprehensive review and discussion and also sharing "My Story" with authenticity, emphasizing the importance of truthfulness, trust-building, and maintaining reliability.

This lesson aimed to ensure the participants' salvation and foster a personal relationship with Jesus as their savior. The participant, as a Christian, must first believe that Jesus Christ, out of His immense love for us, paid the full penalty for our sins with his blood by dying on the cross and that God raised Him from the dead.

Secondly, we must confess that belief and receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord. We call this the Plan of Salvation. Our second session concluded with personal reflection, future projection, and prayer.

Session Three

Our third session opened with prayer and the weekly scripture. This week's scripture was read from the gospel of Luke 14: 25-27, 33, "And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. 33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

This week's icebreaker question was, "If you had a time machine, would you go back in time or into the future?" The lesson for this session was about consecration, commitment, and the cost of being a servant volunteer. During the consecration portion of this lesson, I encouraged each participant to start by setting aside 15 minutes for a time of consecration, focusing on dedicating themselves to a particular purpose, goal, or spiritual practice. This could involve meditating on scripture, fasting, prayer, or any other ritual that would hold personal worth for you, such as Soap Devotionals, Journaling, and following a daily bible study.

During the commitment segment, I encouraged the participants to spend the next 15 minutes reflecting on their commitment to their goals, responsibilities, or relationships

and considering the actions they need to take to honor these commitments and reaffirm their dedication.

The next part of the lesson was cost. I encouraged the participants to dedicate this time to evaluating the costs of pursuing their objectives. Consider the cost of becoming a servant volunteer. The indication was to consider the sacrifices they would need to make by sometimes arriving early or staying late at the church. They should also consider the cost of the resources they would sometimes need to invest in or any challenges they may encounter. The final part of this session was wrapped up by challenging the participants in the areas of consecration, commitment, and cost to consider practicing four things:

1. Time with God's Word
2. Prayer
3. Tithing
4. Fellowshiping

Session three concluded with personal reflection, future projection, and prayer.

Session Four

Our fourth session opened with prayer and the weekly scripture. The icebreaker question for session four was, "What was your best Christmas present?" The scripture for this week also serves as my biblical foundational text from the gospel of John 13:3-5 NIV. "Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped

around him. 6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet? 7 Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand. 8 “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.

9 “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well! 10 Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you. 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. 12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. 13 “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am.

14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.²

This foundational text reveals the importance of creating a servant culture and supports Fresh Wind’s outlook: “Serving is who we are, and this is what we do.” I taught in detail that serving and volunteering are more significant than this project—who Fresh Wind is and what we do. Another focus from this session was Edgar H. Schein and Peter A. Schein's book *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. “The culture of a group can be

² John 13:3-17 New Living Translation (NLT).

defined as the accumulated shared learning of that group as it solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems.³

Andersen and Guerrero's definition of culture⁴ was also discussed. They claim that “culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.”⁵ We discussed further that creating a servant volunteer culture is our aim and focus. The book *The Cultural Experience*, by McCurdy, and Spradley, states, “Culture is the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior.”⁶ During this teaching, we went around the room asking if each participant would write one word in their journals about what the word culture means to them. Session four concluded with personal reflection, future projection, an assignment to write in this week's journals, and prayer.

³ Edgar H. Schein, and Peter A. Schein. *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. 5th edition, (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2017), 42.

⁴ Peter Andersen, and Laura K. Guerrero. *Handbook of Communication and Emotion: Research, Theory, Applications, and Contexts*. (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1998), 472

⁵ “3.2: Culture.” 2021. Social Sci LibreTexts. April 26, 2021.
[https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Courses/Folsom_Lake_College/SWHS_300%3A_Introduction_to_Social_Work_Human_Services_\(Bradshaw\)/01%3A_Untitled_Chapter_1/03%3A_Chapter_3/3.02%3A_Culture](https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Courses/Folsom_Lake_College/SWHS_300%3A_Introduction_to_Social_Work_Human_Services_(Bradshaw)/01%3A_Untitled_Chapter_1/03%3A_Chapter_3/3.02%3A_Culture).

⁶ David W. McCurdy, James P. Spradley, and Dianna J. Shandy. *The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in Complex Society*. Second edition. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2005), 9.

Session Five

Our fifth session, “Leadership and Responsibility,” opened with prayer and the weekly scripture from the gospel of Matthew 4:18-Matt 4:20. One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. 19 Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!” 20 And they left their nets at once and followed him.

The icebreaker question for this week was, “Who would you choose if you could trade lives with any fictional character? The teaching for this week’s session focused on Leadership and responsibility.

The definition of leadership was highlighted as an influence process—any time you try to influence the thinking, behavior, or development of another, you are engaging in leadership.

Given that definition, Jesus is our model for leadership, not just in ministry but wherever we go. Dictionary.com defines Influence as the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something or the effect itself. The second part of this session was teaching responsibility. What is Responsibility? The state or fact of having a duty to deal with something or of having control over someone. Accountability. As a servant volunteer leader, I encouraged the participants and charged them with being accountable for influencing the thinking, behavior, or development of others engaging in leadership. When Jesus said, “Come, follow me”,

Each participant agreed that, as a leader, He (Jesus) was responsible and accountable for the disciples' thinking, behavior, and development.

Verse 20: At once, they left their nets and followed him. Verse 22, and immediately, they left the boat and their father and followed him.

I asked the participants to write this question in each journal: “Am I willing to follow Jesus as my leadership role model?” During this session, focus was also placed on the four leadership styles of Jesus according to Matthew 10:5-10 NLT. 5 Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions: “Don’t go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, 6 but only to the people of Israel—God’s lost sheep. 7 Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received! 9 “Don’t take any money in your money belts—no gold, silver, or even copper coins. 10 Don’t carry a traveler’s bag with a change of clothes and sandals or even a walking stick. Don’t hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve to be fed.

This section outlines the foundational teaching on the four leadership styles outlined in Ken Blanchard's "One Minute Manager" and the service-level volunteer model adopted by the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C. The four leadership styles—directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating—showcased how they can be used to recognize that team members have different leadership needs. How do I lead like Jesus? According to Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges in the book *The Servant Leader*

Every Servant Volunteer Leader should be willing to transform their Hearts, Heads, Hands, & Habits to lead like Jesus.”⁷ Session five concluded with personal reflection, future projection, an assignment to write in this week's journals, and prayer.

⁷ Kenneth Blanchard, and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming Your Heart, Head, Hands, & Habits* (Nashville, TN: J. Countryman, 2002), 51.

Session Six

Our sixth and final weekly session, Selfless Servant Volunteers, opened with prayer and the weekly scripture. Matthew 20:27-29 NLT 27 and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. 28 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.” The icebreaker question for session sixth was, “What was the best or worst haircut/hairstyle you ever had? A significant part of this week’s discussion was taken as a Notable example from Jason Young and Jonathan Malm in their book *The Volunteer Effect*, “Volunteers are the lifeblood of our ministries and organizations, yet we’re living on life support because we have anemic volunteer systems.” This verse, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”⁸ found in Matthew 20:28, describes Jesus as the ultimate "selfless servant." Jesus shows (and proves) that he did not come to be served by others but to serve them, even sacrificing his life for the benefit of many. He essentially displays as an example of putting others' needs before one's own. Jesus’ examples of Consecration, Commitment, and Cost. His infinite humility and His ability to seek to win Himself a place as their servant, wholly devoted to their interests. Jesus says, “Ye should do as I have done to you.” Following His example, each lives not for Himself but for the other. Jesus' exemplary display of meekness and lowliness. Jesus creates the serving culture. We must create a serving culture. Our outlook at The Wind is, “Serving is who we are, and this is what we do.” Jesus is our leadership model. When Jesus said, “Come, follow me”,

⁸ Matthew 20:28 New International Version (NIV)

(We all agreed) Jesus was responsible and accountable for the disciples' thinking, behavior, and development as a leader. Jesus is our leadership model; He directed, Coached, Supported, and Delegated to His disciples. Our sixth and final weekly session, Selfless Servant Volunteers, concluded with personal reflection, future projection, and an assignment to write in this week's journals; prepare to expect the meeting time for our only focus group discussion (which we will discuss later in this chapter) and a closing prayer.

Summary of Learning

Having completed the research, six-week sessions, pre- and post-survey questionnaires, journal paths, and focus group sessions, the remaining question was whether the participants gained knowledge. After thoroughly examining the research methods, I began to see the impact and development of the training on the participants. I will share each participant's development from exposure to the servant volunteer training.

Pre and Post-Tests.

Not all the pre-survey and post-survey questions were measurable during this data analysis. I only included the questions that were measurable and comparable to the hypothesis.

Who should be responsible for recruiting, training, and launching servant volunteers?

Pre-Survey

Participant one

Pre-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members

Participant two
 Pre-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant three
 Pre-Survey - The Members
 Participant four
 Pre-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant five
 Pre-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant six
 Pre-Survey - The Members
 Participant seven
 Pre-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant eight
 Pre-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant nine
 Pre-Survey - The Members
 Participant ten
 Pre-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members

 70 percent - Both the Pastor and the members
 30 percent - The Members

Post-Survey

Participant one
 Post-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant two
 Post-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant three
 Post-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members
 Participant four
 Post-Survey - The Members
 Participant five
 Post-Survey - The Members
 Participant six
 Post-Survey - The Members
 Participant seven
 Post-Survey - The Members
 Participant eight
 Post-Survey - The Members
 Participant nine
 Post-Survey - The Members
 Participant ten
 Post-Survey - Both the Pastor and the members

 40 percent - Both the Pastor and the members

60 percent - The Members

Pre-Survey

70 percent - Both the Pastor and the members

30 percent - The Members

Post-Survey

40 percent - Both the Pastor and the members

60 percent - The Members

After the six-week training, we noticed:

- Four (40 percent) participants changed their responses from Both the Pastor and the members to just the members.
- One (1 percent) participant changed from the members to both the Pastor and the members.
- Three (30 percent) participant responses were the same for both the Pastor and members and
- Two (20 percent) participants remained the same for the members who should be responsible for the volunteer training.

It was revealed that the training influenced some participants to change their responses, but some changed in opposite directions. This tells us that the majority, sixty percent, felt this servant volunteer training was the members' responsibility, supporting the hypothesis.

Am I a servant volunteer?

Pre-Survey

Participant one

Pre-Survey - Yes

Participant two

Pre-Survey - Yes

Participant three

Pre-Survey - Yes

Participant four

Pre-Survey - Yes

Participant five

Pre-Survey - Yes

Participant six
 Pre-Survey - Yes
 Participant seven
 Pre-Survey - Yes
 Participant eight
 Pre-Survey - Yes
 Participant nine
 Pre-Survey - Yes
 Participant ten
 Pre-Survey - Yes

Pre-Survey

Participant one
 Post-Survey – No, not yet
 Participant two
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant three
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant four
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant five
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant six
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant seven
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant eight
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant nine
 Post-Survey - No, not yet
 Participant ten
 Post-Survey - No, not yet

Before the training, the participants were unfamiliar with the project's definition of a servant volunteer. After completing the training, all participants changed their responses from "yes" to "no, not yet." This change indicated that, while they had finished the training, each participant felt there was still significant room for growth and development to embody the role of a servant volunteer fully.

Warren W. Wiersbe said, “If we aren’t careful, we can minister in such a way that we exploit the needs of others to get ourselves recognition, position, titles, honors, and privileges. True servants of God help others whether they themselves get anything out of it or not. Their concern is only that God be glorified and people trust Christ.”⁹

.On a scale of 1-10

How important do you think servant volunteers are to a church or ministry?

Participant one

Pre-Survey - 4

Participant two

Pre-Survey - 5

Participant three

Pre-Survey - 4

Participant four

Pre-Survey - 5

Participant five

Pre-Survey - 4

Participant six

Pre-Survey - 5

Participant seven

Pre-Survey - 5

Participant eight

Pre-Survey - 5

Participant nine

Pre-Survey - 5

Participant ten

Pre-Survey - 5

Participant one

Post-Survey - 8

Participant two

Post-Survey - 9

Participant three

Post-Survey - 10

Participant four

Post-Survey - 8

Participant five

Post-Survey - 10

Participant six

⁹ Warren Wiersbe and Jim Cymbala, *On Being a Servant of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007, P.19

Post-Survey - 10
 Participant seven
 Post-Survey - 10
 Participant eight
 Post-Survey - 9
 Participant nine
 Post-Survey - 9
 Participant ten
 Post-Survey – 9

After the six-week training, every participant changed and increased the value.

100% Volunteer training is overwhelmingly necessary.

Journals

The participants were excited to write in the journals. I only captured more of the entry information closer to the project.

Participant one

Week 1

In-reach vs. Out-reach

80/20 rule → 80% of work being done by 20% of the people

Week 1 Insights:

9/29/2024: Keep getting up and showing up.

9/30/2024: Stay consistent

10/01/2024:

10/02/2024: Find balance.

10/03/2024: Exhibit selflessness and concern for others

10/04/2024: Rest, relax, and reset.

Week 2:

This week we discussed telling our salvation stories when we are trying to reach people to serve.

Week 2 Insights:

10/12/2024: Establish and enforce boundaries. And be okay with people walking away from you because of that.

Week 3: We discussed consecration, commitment, and cost. We were also asked to reflect on our commitment to our goals, responsibilities, or relationships.

Week 3 Insights:

10/17/2024: I had an early start to the work day, so I took time to consider my level of commitment to my job. I never want my professional life to intrude upon my personal life. Reflection: I am reframing “I got to” to “I get to”

Week 4: This week we discussed a serving culture. We were asked “what is the first word that comes to your mind when you hear the word ‘culture’?” The first word that I thought about was egocentrism. I immediately thought about the culture in which we live today, and I considered how self-centered we are as people. We all have a tendency to do things that will benefit our own lives the most. And I believe that a servant culture is one that challenges current culture. It is in our own fleshly nature that we tend to look out for ourselves before others. Therefore, in order to promote a servant culture, we must adopt the mind of Christ in place of the flesh (metanoia).

Week 5: (No Entry)

Week 6: This week we discussed Selfless serving. We started with an icebreaker discussing our favorite and least favorite hairstyle. I mentioned my favorite hairstyle being the first time I got a perm. It was my favorite because I had never seen

We were asked what is the first word that comes to your mind when you hear the word “Selfless”. My word was “Giving.”

“You can give without loving, but you cannot Love without Giving”

Transactional vs Transformational leaders

Transactional leaders tend to be tit-for-tat and only seek to do things that benefit themselves. Their followers are only following directions (aimlessly). They aren’t given any purpose or information for understanding. They are just doing what they’re told. These leaders tend to gate-information for fear of being seen as incompetent (which they might be), or fear of being upstaged.

Transformational leaders are very different. They are not afraid to transform followers into leaders that rise above them. They truly lift as they climb. They are excited to see their followers do greater works than them.

Peter and Jesus’ dynamic

Q: Am I a Servant? Am I a selfless-serving volunteer?

A: Not yet.

And Jesus, being the Master Leader and Servant far supersedes any feats of war heroes and leaders of times present, past, and future. Giving His body up as a ransom for us will never be outdone by anything or anyone. Laying down His life so that I can live is the ultimate act of selfless service that no-one (myself especially) will ever come close to achieving. Albeit, it is a terrific sounding board for us. It lets me know that while I will never do what Jesus has done for me, He has given me the opportunity to share what He has done for us. This is why we must serve Him inside and outside the church. We must freely serve and give as He has freely given to us the ability to do so.

Participant two

Week one

Servant volunteers and Servanthood

Servants who elevated to leaders

Organizations that servants elevated to leaders

Week 2: October 6, 2024

Pastor reiterated and emphasized salvation is through Jesus Christ and that all servant volunteers must have salvation through Christ and a rooting in Christ that gives us the capacity to handle the weight of being Christ-like.

We need the temperament of Christ to serve in ministry

We talked about sharing our raw truth and the Pastor jokingly said he didn't want us sharing the raw truth about our salvation story but there was a consensus among the group that sharing the raw truth can be very fruitful

Week 3: October 13, 2024

We discussed Luke 14:25, focusing on the statement Christ Jesus about hating your life and loved ones in a hope to follow Him

We discussed that the word "hate" in the text was not equivalent to disgust, or hatred. Rather, it meant to "love less".

We also defined and discussed consecration, commitment and cost

Consecration - setting apart, sanctification

Week 4: October 20, 2024

We then discussed John 13:3-5 where Jesus creates the servant culture after He had been given all power by God. we also discussed what culture make us think of

I said culture automatically made me think of “color”

I’m learning that as a leader, you set the tone for your surroundings and you are the example that subordinates follow. It is daunting. I can imagine Jesus knew firsthand that incredible responsibility of being the example for his disciples to follow, and how he washed the feet of the disciples was the ultimate lesson of servant-leader. The humility he displayed after having been given all things into his hands by the Father was the example that Jesus wanted his disciples and us to glean from.

Week 5: October 27, 2024

Leadership and Responsibility

How do I lead like Jesus?

The things that came to mind when I think about leading like Jesus were

Extending grace, consistently

Not condemning mistakes

Jesus calls his disciples by name because of what he knew about them and how they would carry on his ministry after he ascended into heaven

I believe in the duality of being both naturally inclined to do a thing, and needing to be developed and perfected in your natural ability so that you can achieve optimal performance.

I believe all leaders have formative years that prepare them for the leadership roles they receive in their lifetime.

Week 6: November 2, 2024

Matthew 20:27

Selfless service

Whoever wants to be first, must become a slave

Son of man came not to be served, but to serve others

What is selfless serving?

Putting others before our own desires

Am I a servant?

One word for selfless to me is sacrifice

Selflessness means that I sacrifice my needs for the needs of others

I sacrifice my own desires to meet the desires of others

Jesus shows and proves that he cared for others and left us the best example of what selflessness

Am I a Servant?

Not yet

I believe the only way you can arrive at being a servant is that everything you do and every area of your life reflects your servanthood and you serve everyone in everything. That is not me.

Participant three

Participant four

Why do we serve, what keeps us moving, and not quitting no matter what we see? Sometimes we determine how we move based on others instead of staying focused on Christ and serving him.

Servant leadership or is it servant volunteer or are they the same? As I give my honest opinion I believe it is the same but I think people see the person and not the God in them when it comes to serving in the ministry. I heard someone say that the reason they do not attend church although they believe in God is because they cannot follow “man” . At first I didn’t understand it at all, but I had to take time to reflect on it. It made me wonder why, is it so hard for people to support the ministry and feel like their job is done once the service is over and they don’t need to contribute anything else

*Participant five**Participant six*

What does it really take to commit to serving/volunteering? This question keeps circling in my mind. I don’t think there is a incentive or event that the magic bullet. The more I think about my why, the more I think it should be the only why.

I don’t presume to have the answer, but I think my why is a matter of the heart. Our hearts have to be yielded to helping/serving. Do I want to sit and “veg’ out”? Yes...often! But my heart won’t let me. I feel bad sitting when I know my help is needed. I need to serve or help however I can.

Reviewing African American volunteer organizations is quite interesting because I expected to find an approach that is different and specific to that culture. However, I'm not finding glaring differences in the the various African American organizations and those that are non-African American. Whether African American or not, the goal is quite the same: helping people. What I'm finding is that the organizations reach out to serve certain groups of marginalized, needy people based on their founding mission. They identify needs and mobilize volunteers to meet the need(s).

One word to describe CULTURE: Feeling

-John 13:3-5 (NIV) :3 - Powerful transition in Jesus' ministry. The very FIRST thing He did when He was given complete authority and power was serve others.

Jesus has us ALL on His mind. Serving the disciples was far reaching because of the culture He was creating!

At Fresh Wind: Serving is who we are and this is what we do.

Participant seven

If a person feels needed, they will come to church. Give them a job to do within their talents and what ministry they want to serve. Plan a luncheon/workshop with those who are interested in serving. Have each ministry's leader at this workshop as well. After the luncheon split up the attendees according to what ministry they signed up. This will begin the initial meet and greet by the leaders. This will help in obtaining a pool of volunteers.

When I think about culture, I think about race (color). Every race has its own method of serving within their community. Research what manner of serving is needed

within the community of your church. Get volunteers to realize that we are more like Jesus when we serve others.

Jesus as our leadership role model by backing this up with scripture in our training sessions and monthly group meetings.

When I think about being selfless, I think about the word kindness.

Participant eight

Leadership should let them know that they are valued. Leadership should inspire them to use their God given talents by volunteering in the ministry of helps. I believe if a person feels valued, they will begin to attend church on a consistent basis. Secondly for the college and school aged members, another tool could be to have a letter that says “Volunteer Today!” The letter can state, “You can earn college credits and high school service hours by making a positive difference in our community.”

You can not be totally committed until your mindset changes.

We as disciples of Jesus Christ need to take the babes in Christ under our wings. Teach them about the importance of allowing the Holy Spirit to change their mindset now that they are new creatures in Christ. This may take some one on one time spent together. Or, this may be effective in a small group setting. This might be accomplished weekly or monthly.

Continue to mentor your volunteers so that they will begin to have the attitude that, “I get to serve.” They will lose the attitude that, “I have to serve.” You do this by being transparent and telling them your story about what changed your attitude. Now, your attitude is that I get to serve in God’s kingdom.

God saved us not to just be complacent after we get in His family. We are to do as Christ did. We are to serve others. In doing so, we are exemplifying that “Faith without works is dead.”

The culture of serving is that I as a volunteer prioritizes the purpose that God has given me. I do this by prioritizing my relationship with God. God speaks to me and I surrender my plans and take on His plan.

Serving brings me joy because I get to be in God’s service. Serving God gives me strength. Serving God takes the focus off my issues. God becomes my main focus.

Serving brings me joy. The joy of the Lord is my strength. Serving God with joy shows God how grateful that I am. He allows me to be in His service. I get to volunteer. Volunteering is a privilege. When I volunteer, I am honoring my God, my Lord and Savior.

When you volunteer, you are doing it because we as believers owe Him too much. Yes, our salvation has been paid for, but serving Him shows Him that He and His people are our priority.

. It is our responsibility to mentor, lead and hold accountable those that are babes in Christ. We do this by speaking and living before others this truth. We are not to be stumbling blocks or hindrances in the lives of others. We are to meet people where they are as Christ did. We have a responsibility to show people that Jesus is the truth, the way and the life.

Participant nine

How do we cultivate relationships?

I think the best way to cultivate a relationship is to meet the person on common ground. So many times, we try to enforce what we believe on someone without knowing that person first. When this happens, it could lead to that person feeling resentment and put off by the initial meeting. I have learned over many years from working in the non-profit and government sectors that when starting a new relationship, both parties must feel like they have something to gain and learn from the other person. When relationships are built on one-sided intentions, one side will always come up short. Finding that common ground allows all parties to be able to navigate the relationship without “walking on eggshells” waiting on the bomb to drop.

Proverbs 22:6 states, train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it. So, if that church goer grew up just sitting in church as child and not having a role model of service to mimic, then they take that same approach as an adult. This is where we have to meet them on common grounds to determine their interests, talents, hobbies, etc. and have them create a platform where they can feel valued in bringing their gifts to a larger audience.

Transformation – Resistance – What does this like look? Are we equipped to transform someone mentally? Some times a person may not be in the right mental place to accept a role. What resources do we have to assist in this matter?

Bench members – I talked about bench member earlier in this document and I still firmly believe that this a learned behavior first and secondly not being formally asked from someone that they have a relationship with.

Appreciation of volunteers -This is also vital in the ongoing growth of the volunteer program. This does not always have to be some grand reception but could easily be a small token gift or recognition.

Am I a servant leader? Not yet! – Does one ever become a servant leader or there always growth opportunities? I think there should always be an area of your life that can sharpen. When you get to a point that you are no longer growing, then you are setting yourself up for failure.

Participant ten

My salvation experience is not radical, because as long as I can remember, I've always known God. My mom took us to church from a small child, and even since that time, it seems I've always had an awareness of Him and some semblance of communication with Him. It has been a lifelong journey of discovering everything He is, has done, will do - and I've barely scratched the surface, but in that time He has confirmed Himself to be my personal companion and friend, healer, provider and rescuer. I've witnessed the Words I learned in Sunday School from the Bible hop off the pages and into my life.

Week 4

We talked about culture and my one word was environment. Culture is in fact a database of knowledge that influences behavior.

Week 5

Am I a leader? A leader influences the thinking, behavior, and the development of the ones being led. Of course Jesus was a leader and did influence the thinking,

behavior and development of the ones He led; however, there is the responsibility of the person being led to submit to the leadership. So even though Judas started out seemingly under the influence and leadership of Jesus, he either was not sincere, or he decided to submit to another leader. Or could it be another reason. Because clearly, Judas was not following Jesus' lead so Jesus was not responsible for Judas behavior and ultimate demise. Choice and free will are still factors.

Focus Groups

Focus Group One (Participant 1-5)

1. What is your definition of a servant volunteer?
2. How important are servant volunteers to a church or ministry?
3. What could the potential impact be if we had more servant volunteers?

The purpose is to sense the greater need in children, teens, adults, seniors, and the community.

4. How severe is the impact of the lack of servant volunteers?

The purpose is to develop a positive view of the impact. Not in the sense of what we can't do but what we could do.

Focus Group Two (Participant 6-10)

1. What is your definition of a servant volunteer?

Giving of oneself selflessly of their time and talents.

2. How important are servant volunteers to a church or ministry?

They are important to prevent burnouts. You can reach more when you have more volunteers.

3. What could the potential impact be if we had more servant volunteers?

The purpose is to sense the greater need in children, teens, adults, seniors, and the community.

We will be equipped to reach more specialized groups in a bigger broader way.

4. How severe is the impact of the lack of servant volunteers?

The purpose is to develop a positive view of the impact. Not in the sense of what we can't do but what we could do. We could do more activities without burning out the same volunteers.

Conclusion

To grasp and gain or obtain the effectiveness and impact of this project, all of the research methods used for this qualitative research project must be considered and examined thoroughly. Applying the pre-survey and post-survey, six-week teaching lesson, journaling, and focus groups provided a better triangulation to measure the data.

After reviewing this measurement system, we discovered that each method's acceptance supports the hypothesis that if the Fresh Wind Christian Center participants receive servant volunteer training, this will increase the number of servant volunteers, addressing their current lack of involvement.

The service volunteer training and understanding of the project significantly and positively impacted the Fresh Wind Christian Center Church participants.

A thorough examination of each research tool uncovered or exposed increased knowledge of the role of servant volunteers. The participants recorded a new perspective of their roles as servant volunteers within each data set.

The analysis of the data with the research tools revealed not only an increased knowledge but also an increased understanding of the role of the servant volunteer. It also gave a new perspective on their capacity, with an outlook on training future serving volunteers further to eradicate the lack of servant volunteers within our context.

The post-surveys unveiled a strengthened outlook of servant volunteers, the journal reflections revealed a more personal commitment to Christ and to the church as a committed servant volunteer, and the focus groups and the focus groups and new revealed a more unified definition of servant volunteers. I was overwhelmingly impressed by how the participants embraced the project and became more transformable throughout the six-week teaching lesson.

Each research tool uncovered a wish and anticipation to maintain the expansion and growth of these sessions and teaching. The participants in the project conveyed the weight and worth of these teaching lessons not only for their development but also for seeing how it can be profitable for Fresh Wind Christian Center and other churches, ministries, and possible non-profit organizations.

The focus groups collaborated with their experiences from the project and made an immense contribution to this analysis. The key points were the redefined definition of a servant volunteer as giving of oneself selflessly of their time and talents. The two groups expressed the importance of servant volunteers to a church or ministry to prevent burnout, and they said that you can reach more when you have more volunteers.

This continues to support the hypothesis. The groups further supported the theme by creating a culture with a positive view of the impact of having enough servant volunteers, not in the sense of what we can't do but what we can do. We could do more activities without burning out the same volunteers.

This project not only developed the participants, but it also developed me and has been a catalyst to my growth, and it has been encouraging knowing that this project is going to be a benefit to all future participants. Particularly in the area of teaching, training, transitioning, and trusting the participants to engage with their new tools and resources in servant volunteer ministry. This project further revealed accurate data and feedback from my teaching. It also showed the impact of learning. I have never experienced this

My goal is to continue redesigning and increasing this work as a published piece for distribution to assist other leaders, ministries, churches, and nonprofits that struggle with the challenge of not having enough loving servant volunteers to serve both the church and the community.

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